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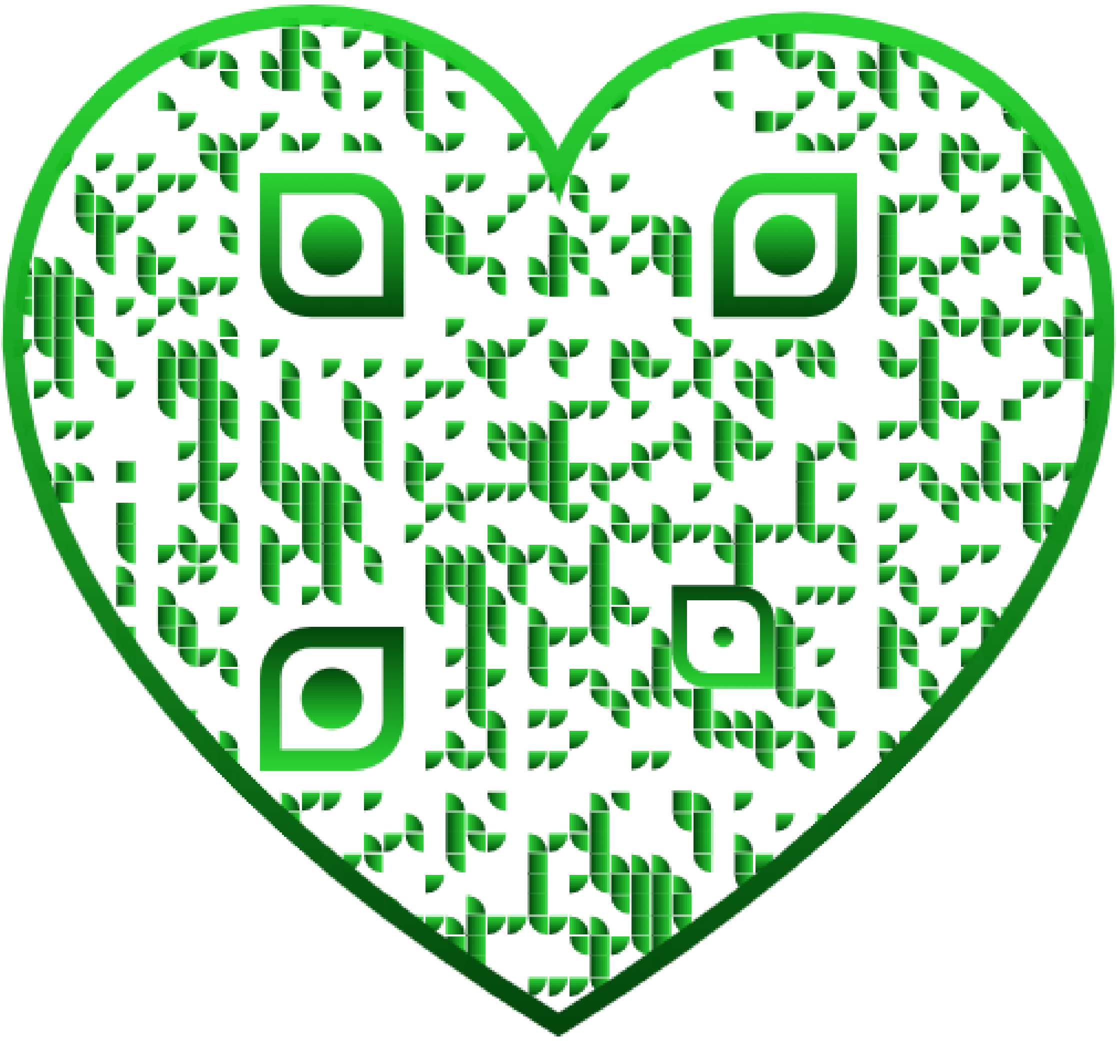

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COMMENT with JAMES DAY

Airsym Yutong TCe12 (EV72 SYM) electric coach in Chertsey in 2023. MARK LYONS

SOLVING THE RANGE PROBLEM

Scania has become the latest manufacturer to announce electric coach products for the UK market, alongside a hybrid coach. It's a market which has not offered significant choice for some time, with Yutong being the only option for right-hand drive battery electric coaches for UK operators.

Part of the hesitancy to provide such vehicles I suspect is because funding for zero emission vehicles has not been made available to the coach industry, making the transition a financial burden few are able to bear. The other factor is of course range.

While some coaches will remain relatively close to their home base, such as those devoted to school services or corporate contracts, many will need to travel long distances to cover scheduled services, day trips or longer holidays. Doing so with a battery electric vehicle is not a simple task, as it's unlikely it will have sufficient capacity to return back to its depot to charge.

For years I have expected that the direction zero emission coaches would inevitably need to go would be hydrogen. Not only does a hydrogen fuel cell vehicle theoretically offer longer range than is possible on a battery electric, but it can also be refuelled much more quickly, in a way not too dissimilar to refuelling with diesel, making en-route top-ups more practical than a recharge. Even a fast charge takes substantially longer than a more traditional refuel.

However, speaking with Scania this month (see page 28) the company's investment in fast charge truck stops caught my eye. An enormous sum of €600m (£529m) has been invested by Scania and other manufacturers in an organisation called Milence, which is to set up charging stations along the most common truck routes throughout Europe. The idea is that once ranges provided by battery electric vehicles can comfortably match the distance a driver can realistically travel within driver's hours regulations before requiring a break, the driver can take their break at one of these stations, have the vehicle fully recharged during this required break, and carry on seamlessly.

> *Such a service has the potential to make range limitations a non-issue*

Such a service has the potential to make range limitations on long distance electric vehicles a non-issue, as long as the range the vehicles do have reaches the critical milestone necessary to get from one recharge point to the next, and charging is rapid enough to replenish the energy used. Coaches could use the same service as trucks, making long distance electric coach operations a more realistic prospect.

There would be some details to work out, however. For one, a truck stop is unlikely to have the necessary facilities to look after a coach full of passengers, and with the coach industry substantially smaller than haulage, few of these rest stops would have enough incentive to cater for coach passengers. There's also the fact that coaches tend to travel to more rural and isolated destinations, and as such are more likely to take routes away from the main haulage arteries where the recharge points are likely to appear. It could also be problematic if the number of active charge points is insufficient, leading to a longer wait, or if traffic problems mean the driver cannot reach the next recharge point before their break is required.

It would also be preferable if the charging points could avoid the rip-off prices motorway service stations charge for fuel and AdBlue, though investment from vehicle manufacturers might be an incentive to keep prices under control.

Nonetheless, it is an interesting concept which could tackle the range concerns faced by coach operators in an intelligent way, should these charging points become sufficiently widespread.

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SURREY'S PREMIER BUS COMP
FALCO

Falcon Coaches Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC (YX68 UJP) on the 479 from Guildford to Epsom. Seen in Epsom town centre, the area is also served by the 467 TfL route which the operator has successfully won the contract for. MARK LYONS

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ALAN MILLAR

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Scania's new Caetano e.Levante-bodied electric coach.
ALAN MILLAR

Celebrating 100 Years of Route 1
arriva
Shoeburyness 2
SN66 WHS

Return of the municipal bus company? Southend Transport was sold by its council owners in 1993, eventually becoming part of Arriva Southern Counties. In pre-1986 Southend livery, complete with coat of arms, Alexander Enviro400 MMC 6499 (SN66 WHS) stands at the city's bus station, officially known as the "Travel Interchange". DAVID JENKINS

Bus Services Act becomes law

The Bus Services (No. 2) Bill has received Royal Assent, passing it into law. The final stage was granted exactly 39 years and one day after deregulation took effect; and three days short of the 40th anniversary of the Transport Act 1985 which implemented it.

Although the Act will see structural changes to the way the bus industry functions, it has not actually ended deregulation. However, it will be easier for Local Transport Authorities to introduce franchises, and where they don't, powers have been introduced to strengthen the role of LTAs in Enhanced Partnerships.

Municipally-owned buses are enabled, the powers curiously extending to district councils as well as those that are Local Transport Authorities. The Act has not clarified as to whether these will have to meet full operator licencing requirements, rather than the section 22 permits used by some council operations, such as North Yorkshire.

The Government has highlighted measures brought in to protect socially necessary services, although the Act falls short on explaining what financial arrangements will be in place to support this. In essence, a more bureaucratic procedure "must be followed if operators wish to cancel or change them".

Reactions from trade bodies, pressure groups and trade unions showed differing levels of enthusiasm for the changes that are to come.

Graham Vidler, CEO of the Confederation of Passenger Transport, said: "It is important that local authorities consider their next steps carefully to fit the specific needs of local areas. There are many different ways to oversee local transport and multiple routes to success. There is no need to rush for franchising – this is a once in a generation decision and it is important to get it right."

Chair of ALBUM, Nottingham City Transport Managing Director David Astill, said: "We accept that the larger city regions may conclude that the franchised approach suits them best. Elsewhere, we hope that the Enhanced Partnership model will retain favour".

He emphasised that ALBUM would work to "ensure that the value and benefit that locally owned and locally managed bus companies bring to the market are recognised and embraced by the local transport authorities."

Few of the large bus owning groups have commented on the new Act, although Janette Bell, First Bus Managing Director, observed that "Giving councils greater control over networks, fares and service standards will only succeed if it's matched by strong collaboration with experienced bus operators."

Helen Godwin, Mayor of the West of England, an area which has yet to declare its hand on franchising, said: "This new law will take the brake off our buses ... we have more options to go further. Working with councils and operators, we are looking closely at how best to deliver the bus network that local people need and deserve."

A statement issued by the RMT said that it welcomed "some elements of this legislation Bill", but that "we are concerned that the provision of decent bus services could continue to be a postcode lottery, and government needs to go much further and deliver a national plan for high quality locally delivered and properly funded publicly bus services which put passengers before profits."

It also added that the workforce in the industry had shrunk by a quarter since 2010.

Much of the Act will require secondary legislation to implement specific provisions, and the Government has also said that it will issue updated guidance to Local Transport Authorities.

Details of funding for LTAs from April 2026 onwards "will be agreed in the coming weeks".

Busway slowed down for safety work

ADVANCE WARNING
FOOTPATH CLOSED
CCTV in operation
Trumpington P&R A

Stagecoach East Volvo B8RLE/Wright Eclipse 3 21303 (BF65 WKS) passes the closed entrance to the northbound busway at Trumpington. Whippet has chosen not to use this section at all in either direction while the works are in progress, while Stagecoach's route A has been halved in frequency. DAVID JENKINS

A blanket 30mph limit has been imposed by the county council on the Cambridgeshire guided busway, as the authority carries out safety work at multiple locations. Previously, buses ran at speeds of up to 50mph.

However, Stagecoach East Managing Director, Darren Roe, expressed frustration that confirmation of the change was made only five days ahead of implementation, giving very short notice to amend service timetables to comply with the new speed limits. The council responded with a claim that there had been full engagement with bus operators, stating agreement had been reached three weeks before the speed limits were lowered.

Stagecoach also warned that journeys may take up to an extra 45 minutes, a figure disputed by the council, which said it had calculated delays of up to 20 minutes.

The work involves erecting fencing at all locations where the adjacent footpath and cycleway is sited immediately next to the busway.

In other places, it is separated by a green verge or a change in levels. The modifications have been deemed necessary, following a Health & Safety Executive prosecution against the county council (*Buses* June), which was held responsible for the deaths of two pedestrians and a cyclist.

During the case, it emerged that no risk assessment had been carried out for the operation of the busway. That has now been completed and was issued during September.

Many signs have now been erected to warn pedestrians and cyclists, warning of "danger to life", as well as white lining with occasional messages to "beware of buses".

The fencing works have required parts of the Busway to be closed completely, for periods of up to two months.

During October and November, a one-mile section south of Cambridge railway station is closed northbound, while the whole route is shut for one mile beyond the Histon & Impington stop.

In both cases, buses are diverted to local roads with a longer journey time.

Once the work is completed – which in places also includes additional lighting and improvements to flood prevention – it is hoped to revert most sections of the busway to higher speeds, although the council has announced that a 1.5 mile section at Histon will be permanently reduced.

While the measures have had the greatest impact on Stagecoach services, Whippet routes U1 and U2 within Cambridge, and the Huntingdon-Cambridge T1 have all been slowed down and/or diverted as the works take place, impacting frequency and reliability.

Stagecoach had to introduce a second temporary timetable on October 26 "to help address the current disruption caused by speed limit changes and closure of the southern busway".

It means that the journey on route B from Huntingdon into the city has been extended from 95 to 110 minutes, while route A from St Ives has been reduced from six to three departures per hour.

The council says it has a budget of £13.58m to cover the cost of the works, which it expects to complete during 2026.

Dartford charger row threatens Fastrack ZEBRA grant

Submissions to a Kent County Council planning committee have claimed that failure to grant planning permission for overhead chargers in Dartford could threaten the whole operation of electric buses on the area's Fastrack network.

The buses chosen for the 15 year contract are opportunity-charged Irizar ie Trams, which require top-ups during the day from overhead-mounted pantograph connections.

Two sets of chargers have already been erected at the Gravesend end of the route, and were planned to become operational in October.

However, plans for similar equipment at the Home Gardens terminus of Fastrack in Dartford have had to be rethought, after it was discovered that the local electricity grid had insufficient capacity, with three other customers awaiting upgrades ahead of Fastrack.

A new site was identified to the south east of the town centre, in a car park alongside the dedicated Fastrack busway. Approximately 16 parking spaces are to be given over to a triangular stopping arrangement which would allow space for three buses to recharge simultaneously.

A planning application was first made in March 2024, but was withdrawn in December, "to address issues raised as a result of consultation and publicity". It has now been resubmitted, with additional details including financial information about the project.

The papers reveal that the ZEBRA grant for buses and infrastructure was £7.8m, of which £6m was for vehicles and depot charging, £0.8m for the Gravesend chargers and £1m for the same in Dartford. ZEBRA funding contributed £214,000 to the £450,000 cost of each Irizar ie Tram.

The submission states that if planning permission is not granted, Kent County Council could face costs of up to £4.29m. These include reducing the Irizar fleet from 28 to 17 buses, with part of the ZEBRA grant returned to DfT, although some revenue would be received from the sale of these buses and the now unused recharging equipment intended for Dartford.

It also says that costs of operating Fastrack would rise, including £55,000 per month to lease 11 replacement diesel buses, and the loss of the higher rate of Bus Service Operators Grant for electric buses. The impact of partial electrification "will result in the Fastrack operation becoming a cost to KCC rather than a revenue generating scheme".

The planning application is recommended for approval, but has yet to go before Kent County Council's Planning Committee, which postponed the September meeting at which it was to be presented.

Tender loss provokes commercial competition

The loss of Lancashire County Council funded routes 88/89 between Lancaster and Knott End to Stagecoach appears to have prompted Lonsdale Buses to find alternative work for the vehicles involved.

One bus each is needed for two new commercial hourly routes operating from Morecambe, the 83 to Brookhouse and the 85 to Carnforth.

While the 83 reinstates a number of links lost in previous years, the 85 is broadly similar to Stagecoach's existing route 5, with the new Lonsdale service timed a few minutes ahead of Stagecoach journeys.

Lonsdale Buses are operating the new routes on Mondays to Saturdays, although Stagecoach also offers a Sunday service on route 5.

In the retendering exercise, Lonsdale gained one service from Stagecoach, the one-bus 18 city circular in Lancaster, offsetting its losses on the three-bus Knott End contract.

Settle
then 580 to Skipton 581
Lonsdale buses
Lonsdale buses
BU25 YZO

Lonsdale Buses' Volvo B8RLE MCV eVoRa BU25 YZO has arrived in Kirkby Lonsdale from Lancaster as an 81, with the destination display now showing it as heading for Settle as a 581, before finally becoming a 580 to Skipton. Passengers now have to pay separately for each of the three legs of the through journey. ALAN MILLAR

The operator has ended through fares on its linked Craven Connection services, which are registered in three sections between Skipton and Lancaster. Passengers making the through two-and-a-half-hour 45 mile journey will now have to pay again en route at Settle and Kirkby Lonsdale, where buses change route numbers. However, even with the single fare capped at £3 for each section, the through fare is cheaper than the £9.90 charged in 2018.

Further rural franchise pilots to be explored

The Department for Transport is making funding available for further areas to study the possibility of introducing franchising in a rural environment.

The areas chosen include Cumbria, where the two unitary councils, Westmorland and Furness covering the south and east, and Cumberland, covering the north and west, are likely to be re-united under a mayoral combined authority. Their predecessor county council had largely withdrawn from subsidising buses, although Cumberland has recently announced that it will be spending £3.55m of BSIP funding on a range of new and expanded services, which will be marketed as Cumberland Go.

Hertfordshire announced that it had been awarded £360,000 to review existing operations, expected to focus on Stevenage and the north and east districts of the county. It stated that it was planning to consider “whether a franchising model could offer better, more reliable journeys... within more rural areas of the county”.

Brasbury End Ware
Cheshunt Brookfield Ctr 907
CONNECTING YOUR JOURNEY
Centrebus
Connect Herts.
YX23 ORW

Hertfordshire has already reshaped parts of the county network with new services introduced using BSIP funding. Centrebus Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 597 (YX23 ORW) sets out from Stevenage bus station on Herts Connect route 907, which crosses East Hertfordshire District on its way to Cheshunt. DAVID JENKINS

It already has a DfT-funded DRT scheme, HertsLynx, running in north Hertfordshire, and has introduced a number of new cross-county routes under the Herts Connect identity. The council had previously determined not to pursue franchising on grounds of cost, but that Conservative administration was displaced by the Liberal Democrats in elections earlier this year, who appear to be warmer to the principle.

Proposals are expected by April 2026, but Hertfordshire warns “any approved plans may require further funding to move into implementation”.

477 competitors co-operate on fares

The two replacement operators for Arriva Kent's withdrawn 477 (*Buses* last month) between Dartford, Swanley and Orpington have announced that they will accept each other's day and weekly tickets.

Go-Coach, now beginning to trade as Go-Bus, and Go-Ahead owned Kent Country Buses are offering a £5.50 day ticket or a £25 weekly version which can be used on buses of either operator. Although Go-Coach is largely confined to the Dartford-Swanley section, the offer appears to be available across the whole of the route. Both companies are advertising a £3 single flat fare, whereas Arriva offered a £1.90 single within the Transport for London area.

On the last day of the Arriva service, Saturday 25 October, buses carried a special message on the destination display to mark the end of Arriva's operations. However, the company announced via social media that some afternoon journeys would not run because of staffing issues, including the last service from Orpington to Dartford.

prospect place
Last day of Arriva route 477
Thank you for your custom!
477
arriva
TK maxx

Arriva Kent Thameside Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 4088 (YX17 NYA) arrives into Dartford with a special destination display to mark the last day of Arriva operation of the 477. DAVID JENKINS

Operators line up to bid for West Yorks contracts

Information published on the Government's Find a Tender website has revealed 12 operators have joined the dynamic market to tender for large franchise contracts in West Yorkshire.

Incumbents Arriva, First, Go-Ahead, Stagecoach and Transdev are joined by ComfortDelGro, Mobico, Rotala, Tower Transit and Transport UK. Also registered are Whippet Coaches, part of the Ascendal Group, and Tockwith-based DM Motor Services, which currently has an O licence for 20 vehicles.

Depots and most buses for these contracts will be supplied by the Combined Authority.

Other than Transport UK, the same operators are also on the register to bid for smaller contracts, where they will be responsible for providing buses and depots. They are joined by a dozen existing local Small and Medium Enterprise operators, with First taking a second bite of the cherry through its Tetley's Motor Services subsidiary.

The authority has agreed to release a £30m deposit to secure manufacturing slots for new buses to be delivered for the first round of franchising, due to start in April 2027. The report did not indicate what quantity of buses this covered, but it estimated total procurement costs for Round 1 at £100m.

Not all of West Yorkshire's existing SME contractors have signed up to participate in franchising. Jackson's of Silsden is one such. It holds only one contract, for a single bus on route 903. Mecedes-Benz Sprinter/Mellor WV71 ZTU leaves Keighley bus station for its home village in October 2023. DAVID JENKINS

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CT4N faces uncertain future

Wollaton Estates 20
CT4N
K18 CTN

CT4N route 20 is a partly-subsidised service that runs on two days a week. Leaving Nottingham city centre for Wollaton is Optare Solo K18 CTN. RUSSELL YOUNG

Community-owned operator CT4N has gone into insolvency, according to a report on the *BBC* website.

The Nottingham-based company has announced it intends to seek a Company Voluntary Arrangement from its creditors, which would enable it to continue trading while it pays off its debts over a fixed period of time.

It holds an O licence for 45 vehicles running from four operating centres, and employs around 75 staff. Most of its work is contracted, mainly to Nottingham City, Nottinghamshire County and Derbyshire County Councils, running a mixture of local bus, school and demand responsive services.

It has gradually spread from reliance solely on Nottingham City work – for which it once ran no fewer than 58 electric buses – and now operates mainly diesel buses, including commercially on route 18 between Nottingham and Stapleford or Wollaton.

However, it suffered a significant blow earlier this year when it lost the Nottingham hospitals Medilink contract to Skills (*Buses* July).

CT4N had run the services since 2014, and it represented around nine buses' worth of work. The BYD K9UR electrics associated with the service – the first delivered to the UK, in 2016 – have been returned to their owner Nottingham City Council, which has since put them up for auction.

The company was subject to potential strike action in the summer over pay rates, although had agreed to implement the Real Living Wage earlier this year. However, its financial troubles appear to go back further, with 2023/24 accounts for both the company and its parent, the CT4N Charitable Trust, now more than nine months overdue.

In addition, those for the Trust for 2022/23 were qualified by the auditors declaring that "adequate accounting records have not been kept".

More buses to support Oxford congestion charge

Oxford Bus Company's route 3/3A is being extended from the city centre to the railway station as part of the changes. Wright Streetdeck Electroliner 80775 (BN24 ZXW) on a citybound 3A passes through the existing bus gate in the High Street. DAVID JENKINS

Oxfordshire County Council's controversial temporary congestion charge in Oxford was introduced at the end of October, the first such since London in 2003.

The scheme charges cars and motorhomes £5 per day to pass through six traffic filters, four of which apply between 07:00-19:00, and the other two in peak periods only.

The temporary arrangement is intended to reduce congestion in the city while the major Botley Road is closed for long term Network Rail engineering works at Oxford station.

The works are expected to last until August 2026, but could extend for up to two years.

To support the scheme, journeys towards the city from any of Oxford's park and ride sites will be free for three months, while a range of bus service improvements will start during November.

Oxford Bus Company says that faster journeys will enable it to save seven vehicles from its city network, which will be redeployed to enhance other services.

In particular, it is speeding up peak hour journey times and increasing frequencies on several services, as well as extending routes 3/3A to the railway station, and adding hourly night journeys to the same route.

A major focus is improving links to the large John Radcliffe Hospital, which employs more than 15,000 people. It will receive more frequent services from north and south Oxford, broadly increased from four to six buses per hour, and a completely new orbital route from Rose Hill. Thames Travel's H2 bus from Witney to the hospital will also provide faster peak time journeys.

Stagecoach improvements start at the end of November, and will also include faster and more frequent journeys on established routes, as well as better links to park and ride sites.

Notably, it is adding four buses an hour at the northern Oxford Parkway site, two of which are an extension of existing route 800 from the city centre, while the other two are route 600 extended cross-city from the southern Redbridge park and ride.

The county council anticipates that the congestion scheme will have a surplus of £3.2m over 10 months, with the free park and ride offer costing over £1m.

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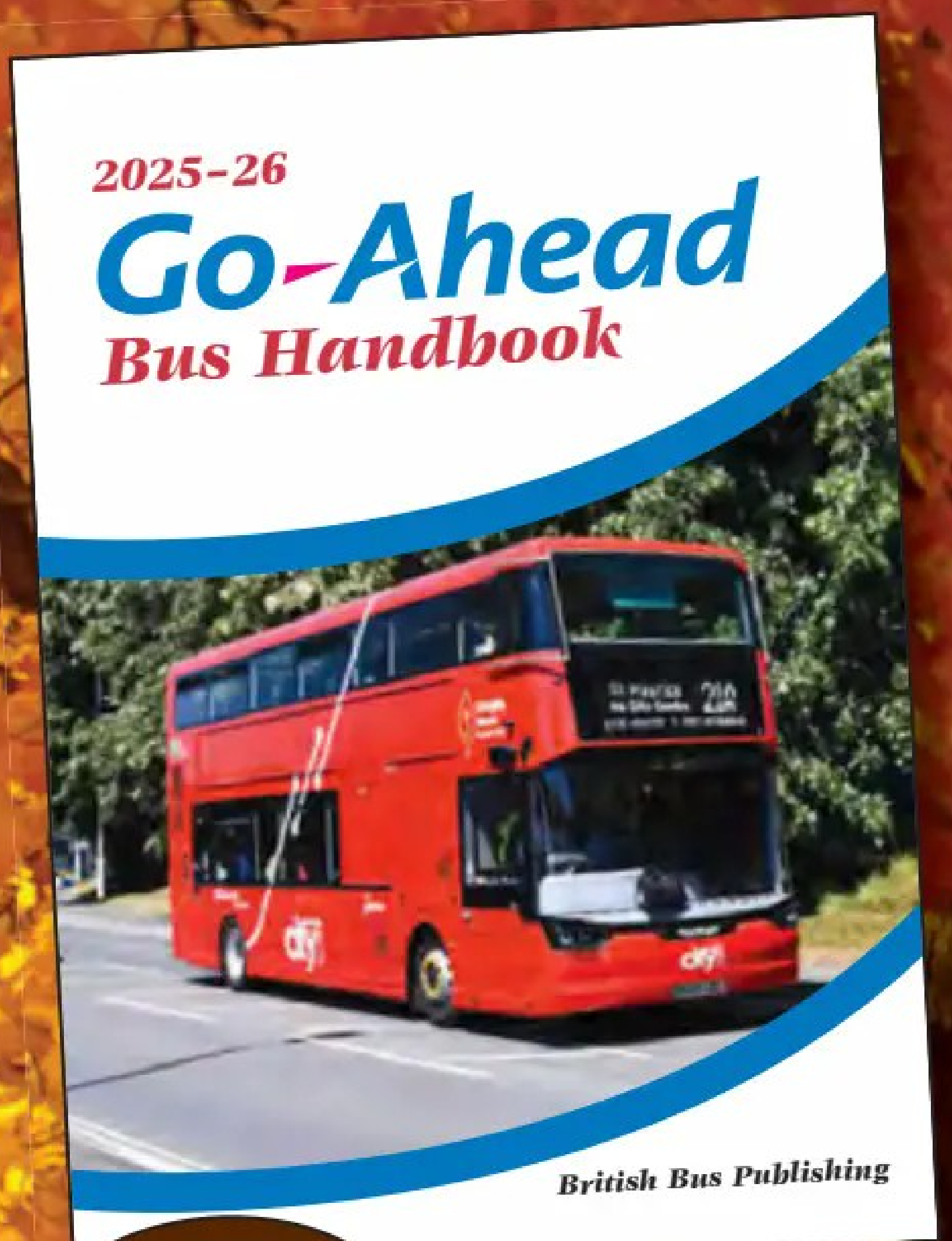
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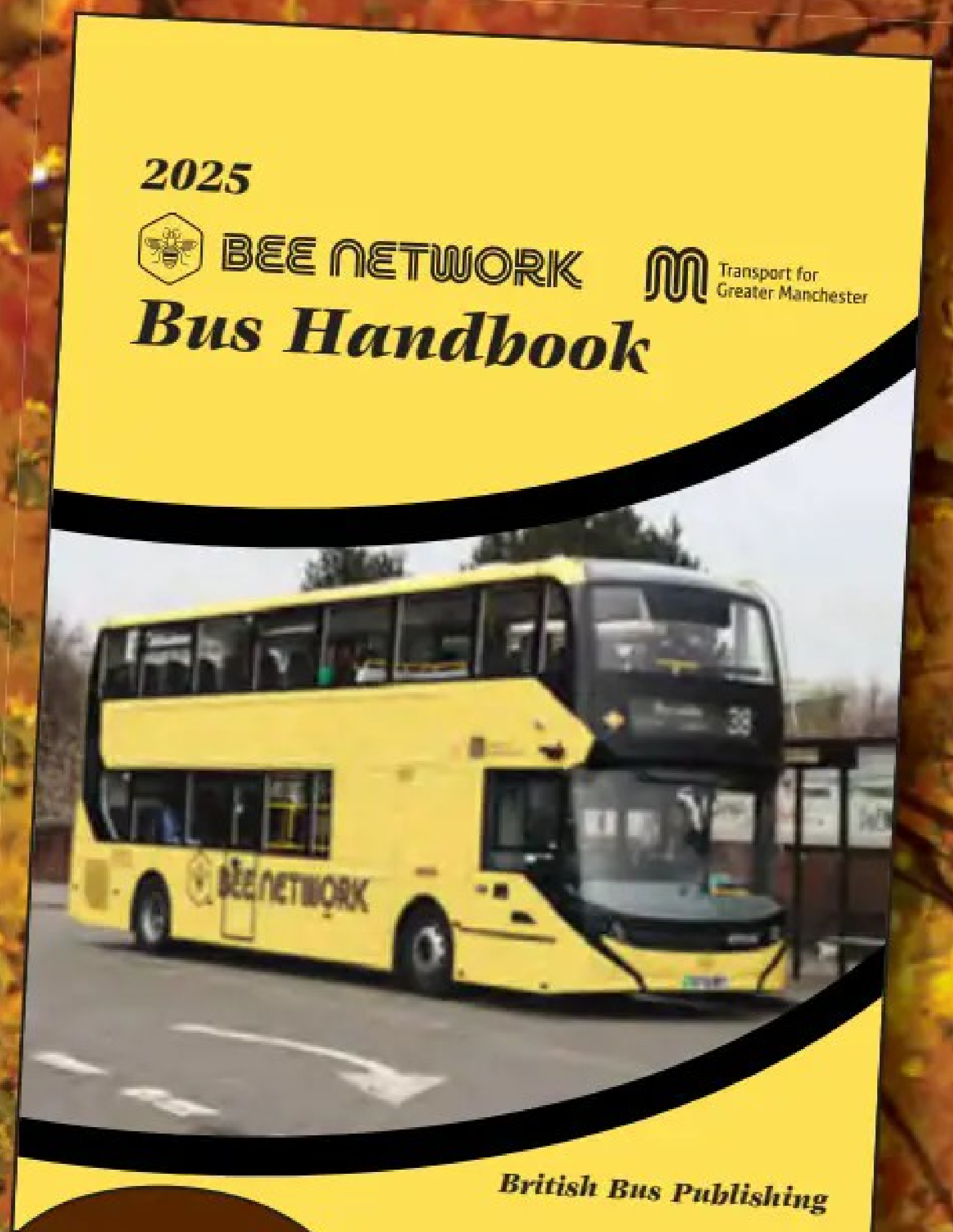
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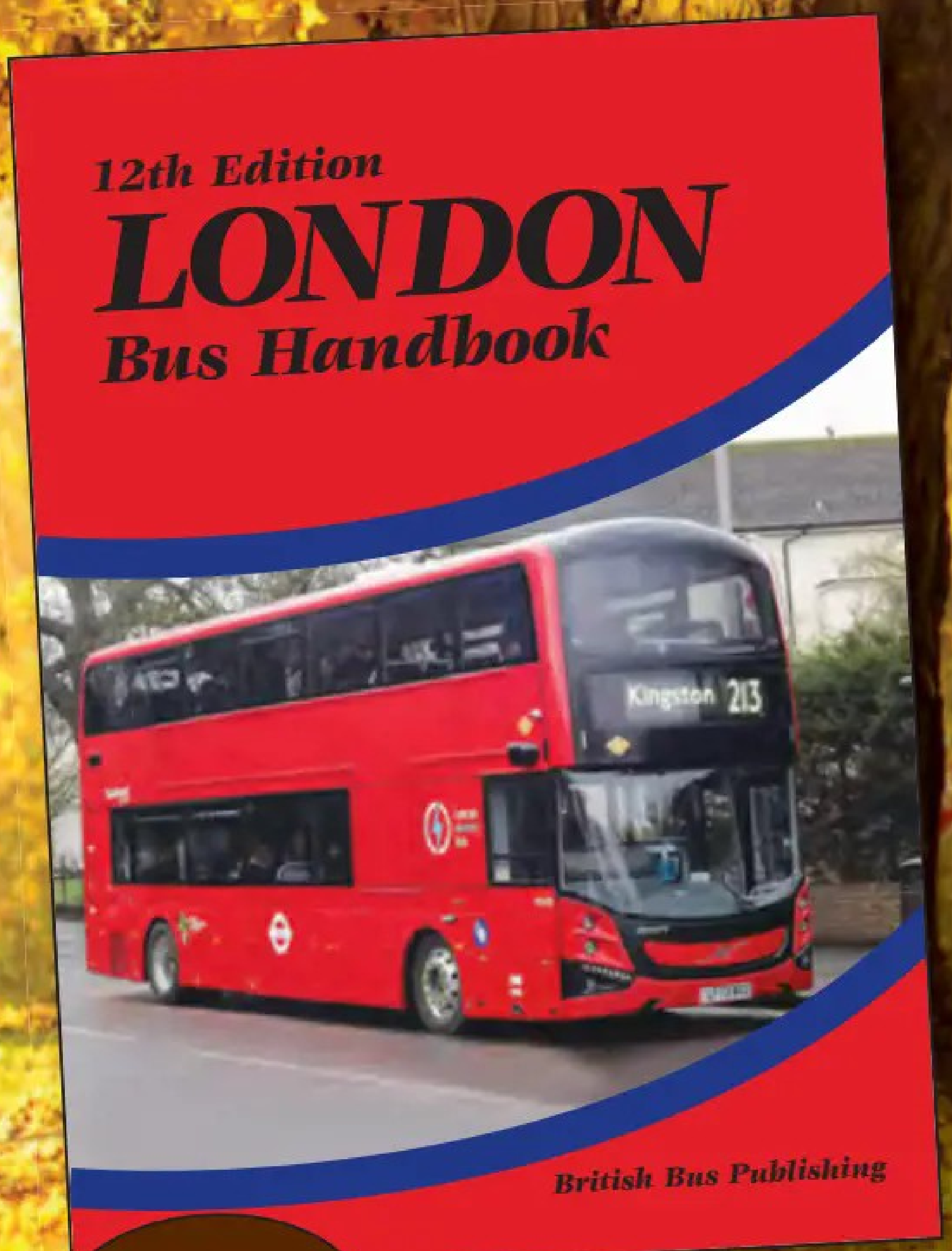
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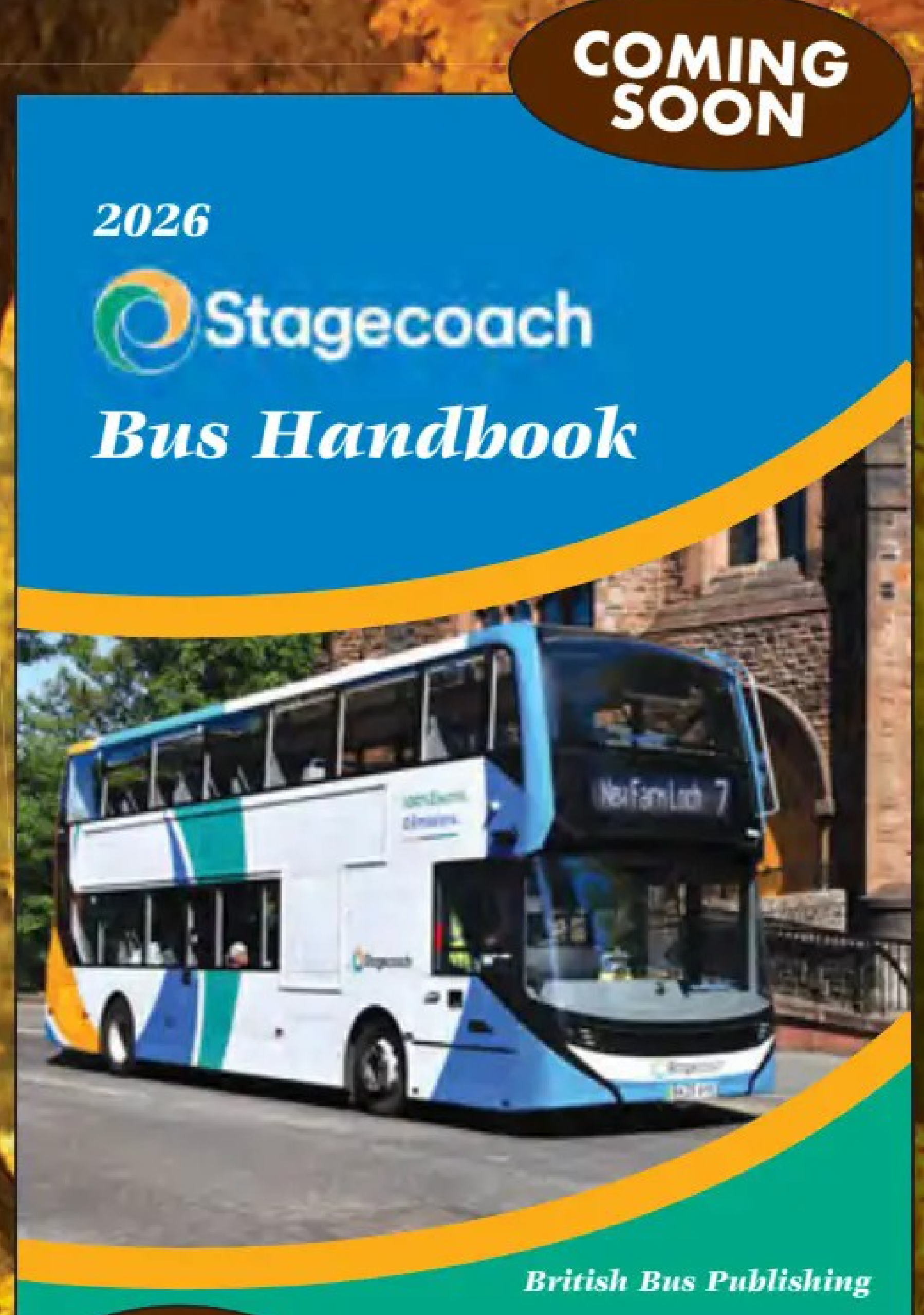
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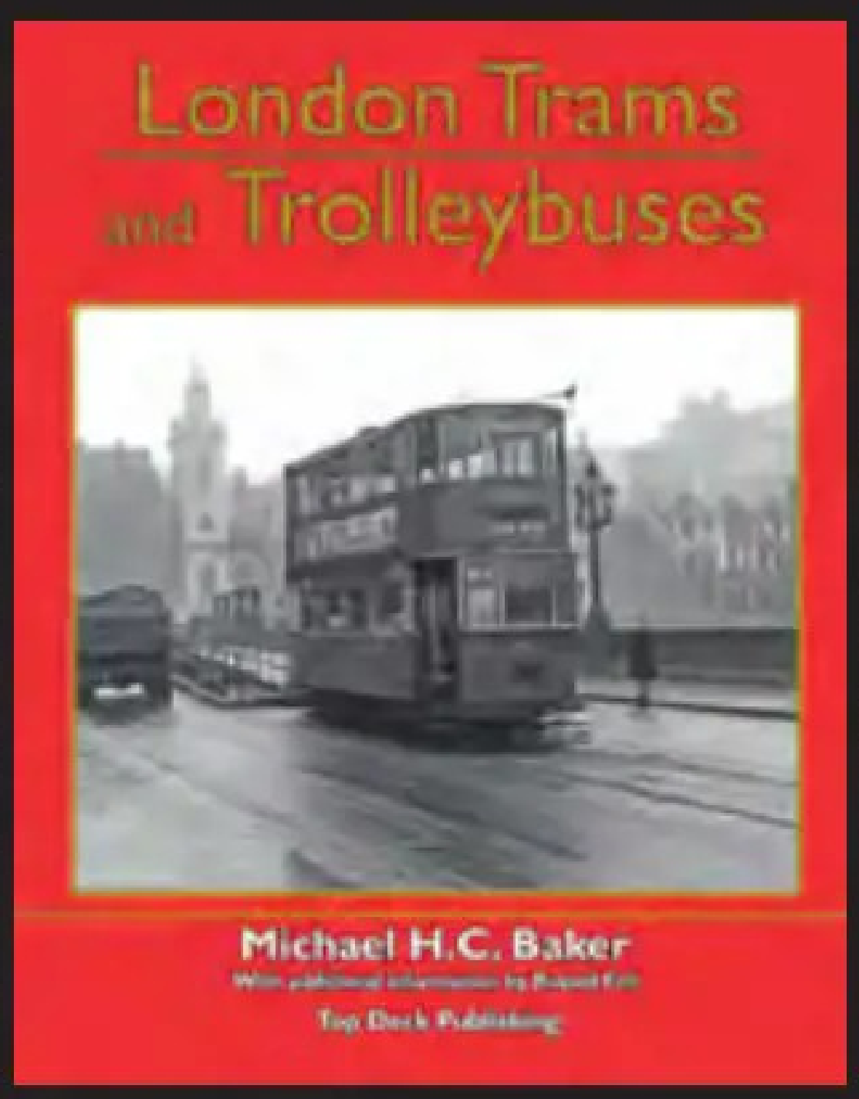
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INSIDE TRACK

with **DAVID LEEDER**

POMPEY'S PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE

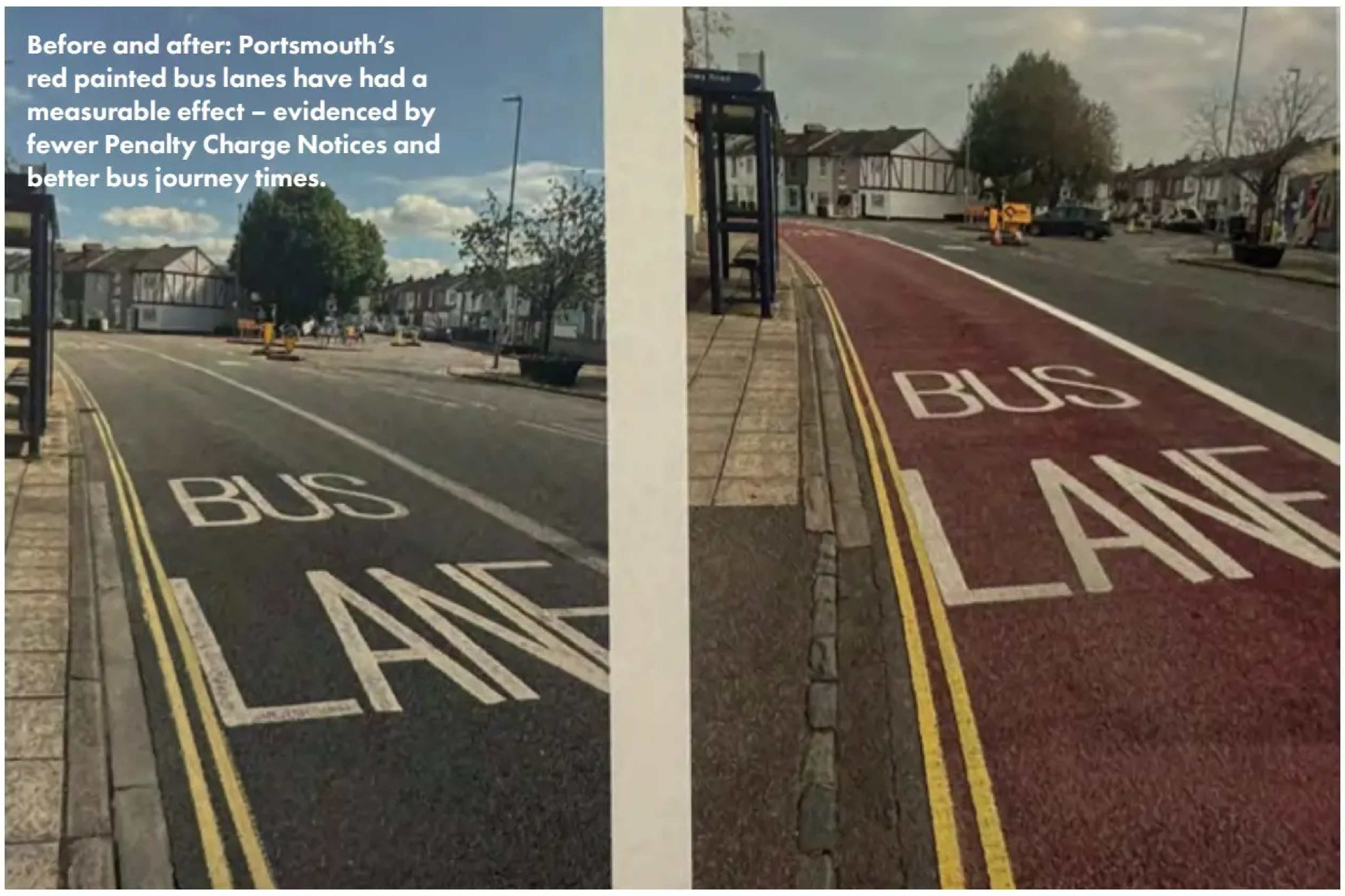
This year's Quality Bus Conference, sponsored by the DfT and the Bus Centre of Excellence, was held in Portsmouth, which has been emerging as one of Britain's leading bus cities.

Portsmouth is an unusual place: many people forget that it is an island, hemmed in by water on three sides, and separated from the mainland by a narrow channel. Densely packed with housing, naval facilities, industry and retail, it has just three entry points, plus the railway down to the harbour. Some areas look like inner London, but turn a corner and you are in the Edwardian English seaside. At the end of a quaint street in Old Portsmouth, you are quite likely to see the silhouette of a vast, grey aircraft carrier, or the blue Solent, alive with yachts.

Portsea Island therefore has a complex, polycentric geography, with important nodes at Commercial Road (traditionally the retail and administrative centre), breezy seaside Southsea, and North End. The harbour (always known as The Hard in Portsmouth) – and once a place of vast employment that demanded long lines of Leyland Atlanteans at shift times – remains a critical base for the Royal Navy. It is now also a centre for upmarket retail and tourism, the home of the magnificent historic ships, and a vital transport interchange with ferries to the Isle of Wight and the Gosport/Fareham peninsular.

After World War Two, a significant part of the bombed-out population was relocated to new estates and expanded towns that lie north of Portsea Island itself, but within the city's employment, education and retail 'gravitational pull'.

All of this means that Portsmouth generates very complex passenger movements that no simple 'hub and spoke' network can ever solve – there are at least five hubs on Portsea alone. It's a transport planner's dream, or nightmare, with a need to balance very short trips around the island, with quite long ones in and out of the satellite estates and towns of Cosham, Paulsgove, Havant and Waterlooville, not to mention cross-harbour flows to Gosport.



Before and after: Portsmouth's red painted bus lanes have had a measurable effect – evidenced by fewer Penalty Charge Notices and better bus journey times.

Modernising

By long tradition, Portsmouth has always had at least two bus operators – for decades Portsmouth City Transport in its distinctive royal purple garb, and Southdown in apple green. PCT trolleybuses hummed round the island, taking seafarers and workers to the Dockyard and shops, while Southdown focused on longer routes for shopping and tea in genteel Southsea. From 1947 to 1986, a Portsmouth Joint Services agreement provided a common network and timetable that solved many of 2025's integration challenges. Their 21C successors are First Bus and Stagecoach, and today's routes are far less distinct, and more intertwined.

The last decade has seen Portsmouth re-emerge as one of Britain's most progressive bus cities, and the pace of improvement has been accelerating. The key – as in all successful organisations – is good people, and Portsmouth has many, within the City Council, and the bus operators. This is not by chance. The leadership teams have actively recruited the best, because they are essential to deliver such a complex plan.

The most obvious sign of change is the fleet of 62 electric buses – the Solent Electrics – run by First and part-funded by DfT, and the appearance of the unified Portsmouth Buses branding. Hundreds of bus shelters across the city are being systematically refurbished or replaced to new standards, with comprehensive digital information and comfortable, wooden seating.

Pompey Link is that rarest thing – a coherently thought-out DRT trial that connects the remote Paulsgrove housing estate with Port Solent, and the core bus network. There has been a mass of sensible, detailed marketing action to coordinate the tariff and timetable, and run promotions to stimulate user trial across Portsmouth Buses – including fares-free weekends. Portsmouth's park-&-ride is being re-thought and re-vitalised, after the challenge of Covid caused many other places to give up.

Collaboration

Crucially, the City's highway leadership are on the bus, using 'digital twin' traffic modelling techniques to develop improvements – large and small – that let the buses run faster, without alienating too many road users, or losing vital political support. The visible evidence is the growing amount of red tarmac on sections of bus-only road, but there is also much behind-the-scenes work around junction management and traffic signals.

The DfT has played a crucial role – putting up over £48m via BSIP, and making ZEBRA grants that have unlocked significant operator investment in fleet and power equipment.

Passenger numbers are the vital measure of success, and Portsmouth is now exceeding 2019 levels, with a rising trip-rate (bus trips per head of population) that is the net effect of more fare-payers, and waning concessions. Even with recent growth, Portsmouth has scope for enhancing its bus use compared to places such as Oxford, Brighton and its arch-rival Southampton. There is more to do, including much on the highway side to improve passenger journey times, and a further expansion of the electric bus fleet. The Council is busy developing plans with the operators for a jointly agreed, jointly funded delivery plan for the next phase of investment and growth.

Why is Portsmouth making so much progress, in such a complex, challenging geography? Firstly, the answer lies with good people across multiple organisations, who have enthusiastically come together to build a common plan, focused on very practical changes. Secondly, the partners are focusing on the passenger – working to make journey times more competitive, buses more comfortable, the network more comprehensible, and waiting facilities more civilised. ■

GLOBAL NEWS

by MARTIN BENSLEY

BANGALORE PLAGUED BY ELECTRIC BUS BREAKDOWNS

The electric buses are built by Tata Motors subsidiary TML Smart City Mobility Solutions Limited. TATA

Bangalore's BMTC municipal has stationed rapid-response tow trucks at strategic locations in the city after another spate of breakdowns left electric buses struggling to stay on the streets.

Fresh BMTC data reveals a steep rise in e-bus failures, the *Times of India* reported. Of the 645 breakdowns listed in 2024-25, 577 of them involved battery-electrics - a 36-fold increase from just 16 incidents the year before.

Officials at the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation blame the sharp increase in breakdowns on rainy weather affecting batteries and electrical components and also on the poor state of roads.

BMTC operates most of its buses through sub-contractors, with maintenance largely outsourced.

In September alone police reported 281 bus breakdowns, most of them caused by failed electric vehicles. Diesel bus problems are rare and are mostly caused by poor quality spare parts. City officials said more than 13,000 breakdowns and other incidents involving electric buses operated on behalf of BMTC have been reported in the past two-and-a-half years.

Around 20% of Bangalore's 7,000 buses are battery-electrics, including more than 920 12m rigids from Tata subsidiary TML Smart City Mobility Solutions Ltd. Buses from Ohm Global Mobility Ltd are also prominent.

NEW YORK BOOSTS GREEN BUS PROGRAMME

New York State has awarded nearly $80m (£60m) of funds to seven regional transit agencies to expand local zero-emission bus operations amid a headwind from federal authorities in Washington.

The grants come through the Zero-Emission Transit Transition (ZETT) Program administered by the New York State Department of Transportation. They support fleet purchases, depot upgrades, and charging and fueling systems for non-MTA transit providers.

The funds come as President Trump's administration proposes rollbacks of emissions regulations and the elimination of federal EV tax credits, which could slow the adoption of electric vehicles and hinder progress toward climate goals.

The programme was launched in December 2024 with $100m (£75m) in funding and received an additional $20m through the FY26 Enacted Budget.

Four agencies - the Capital District Transportation Authority, Central New York Regional Transportation Authority, Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority, and Rochester-Genesee Regional Transportation Authority - will each receive $17.5m for fleet conversions and facility construction.

SWISS POSTBUS TO LAUNCH DRIVERLESS TAXI SERVICE

Swiss national bus operator PostBus plans to launch an on-demand robot taxi service in eastern Switzerland from 2027.

From the first quarter of 2027, customers will have access to 25 fully automated electric vehicles, each with space for four passengers. Testing with mapping runs will begin in December 2025 with the first vehicles and safety drivers.

The project, branded AmiGo, is a collaboration with the Apollo Go robot taxi service from Chinese technology group Baidu which already operates more than a thousand automated vehicles worldwide.

The on-demand vehicles, which can be booked via an app, form carpools between users if they are travelling a similar route at the same time.

Postbus has already tried out passenger-carrying autonomous shuttles in the southwest town of Sion and a luggage robot in the car-free holiday village of Saas-Fee.

Postbus said the projects provided valuable experience and were a success from a technical point of view. Surveys also showing growing public acceptance of driverless shuttles.

** Tests with driverless VW ID Buzz minibuses have recently started in several districts of western Berlin. The vehicles are similar to those already trialled without passengers in Hamburg. Interested passengers can apply on a website to ride for the first time in the first half of 2026. The project is being financed by a federal grant worth €9.5m.*

Hauptbahnhof
via Am Brill
irizar ie bus
4505

An Irizar ie18 articulated bus for Bremen at the 2025 Mobility Move show in Berlin. MARTIN BENSLEY

IRIZAR ELECTRICS GAIN MORE TRACTION IN GERMANY

Cologne operator Kölner Verkehrs-Betriebe (KVB) has become the second German municipal operator to place a significant order with Spanish manufacturer Irizar.

The city has ordered 78 electric buses - 38 articulated electric buses and 40 solo buses - for delivery from October next year. KVB said a total of eight manufacturers tended for the order.

The Cologne Irizars will join 118 VDL electrics and various MAN and Mercedes diesel models.

Earlier this year, Bremen operator BSAG took 15 Irizar ie18 artics to work alongside 35 eCitaro Gs, 20 eCitaro rigids and Mercedes diesels. Most of the new electrics are deployed in the north or the city

BAYREUTH DROPS HYDROGEN BUSES FOR ELECTRICS

The main bus operator in the German town of Bayreuth has scrapped plans to add hydrogen-powered vehicles to its fleet and will substitute battery-electrics instead.

Municipal Stadtwerke Bayreuth said a review of the project started two years ago revealed that hydrogen is no longer economically competitive for the town.

Battery-electric buses also now have a longer range than they did when the initial decision was made in 2023.

"Our goal was never an ideological one, but rather the most economical solution for climate-neutral city bus transport," said Stadtwerke director Markus Rützel.

Until new electric buses arrive, Bayreuth will continue to rely on biogas as a bridging technology: around 80 per cent of the bus fleet currently runs on this fuel. The municipal has set itself the goal of ensuring that its vehicles are emission-free on the roads, and electric buses would make this possible.

ARRIVA ITALIA TENDERS FOR 316 NEW ELECTRICS

Arriva Italia, which was taken over by I Squared Capital in June 2024, has revealed a major open tender for the supply of urban and interurban buses for its operations in Aosta, Turin, Bergamo, Brescia, and Cremona.

The tender worth a total of €124.8m (£109m) is divided into nine separate lots and covers the supply of 316 vehicles in lengths ranging from 10.5 to 18 metres, Italy's *Autobusweb* website reported.

Most of the buses will be battery-electric or powered by compressed natural gas. The order also covers 60 mild-hybrid diesel, and 40 conventional diesels. Deliveries are scheduled

EBUSCO REPORTS RECOVERY PROGRESS

Ebusco, the Netherlands bus manufacturer which narrowly avoided insolvency last year, has reported progress in delivering buses and rebuilding customer confidence.

"Ebusco delivered 39 buses delivered in Q3 2025, in line with Q2 deliveries and providing further proof of Ebusco making progress with becoming a stable company again," said a company operational statement.

Ebusco said it expects to deliver at least an equal number of buses in Q4 of this year and had orders for 164 buses on its books as of September 30.

"Buses have been steadily delivered to our clients, which is essential for rebuilding customer confidence and securing future success," said board members Michel van Maanen and Peter Bijvelds in a joint statement.

Ebusco said it strongly believed the market for zero emission buses continued to be a "seller" market amid high customer demand for electric buses.

RATP HOLDS ONTO PARIS CITY BUS NETWORK

Paris transport operator RATP remains the dominant operator in and around the French capital after a crucial tendering victory which also saw Keolis and Transdev make significant gains.

Acting through a subsidiary, RATP won the competitive bidding process for all bus routes within Paris itself and will continue to be the sole operator of Parisian buses.

The RATP network was set to face competition from 2025, triggering what some pundits called the "battle for Paris".

Across the larger Île-de-France region, RATP had to accept the arrival of new competitors, but retained 70% of its routes (226 routes, or 3,543 buses in total) and 75% of its staff.

The Italian group ATM SPA, a new entrant, won the contract to operate 18 bus lines in the Île-de-France region. Keolis, already present in the outer suburbs, obtained 65 lines in the inner suburbs, two express bus lines, three on-demand transport lines, and management of the T9 tramway. The German-French group Transdev will operate 19 lines.

LOOK IN ON LONDON

by **MARK LYONS**

TWO MORE SUPERLOOP CONSULTATIONS LAUNCHED

PIC CAP 4: New Superloop service SL14 (Stratford Bus Station – Chingford Hatch) will largely parallel existing route 158 (Stratford – Chingford Mount). Although the 158 is one of London's busiest bus routes, there were few taken for Arriva London DW492 (LJ61 CBO) when it was seen in Leyton on May 14 this year. MARK LYONS

Transport for London has published its plans for a Superloop service linking Stratford Bus Station and Chingford Hatch. New route SL14 would run every 12 minutes during Monday to Saturday daytimes and largely parallel existing route 158 (Stratford Bus Station – Chingford Mount). It would, however, only service 13 intermediate stops compared to over 40 on the 158.

Route 158 is one of the busiest on the network. In 2023-4 it carried over 8.5m passengers making it the 21st most popular service. In its consultation documents TfL says that the SL14 would create more room for passengers along the busiest parts of route 158 and in areas where new housing development is planned. It is, however, suggesting that the daytime frequency of the 158 might be cut to a bus every eight minutes instead of every six minutes at present.

The need to create sufficient stand space at Stratford means that introduction of the new route would also see existing route D8 (Crossharbour, Asda – Stratford) diverted away from its current terminus to Stratford City.

A consultation has also been opened in respect of route SL15 (Clapham Junction – Eltham). The new route will establish a number of new links. It will largely follow the A205 South Circular Road although this means that it will have to pass under a low rail bridge at Tulse Hill. It will therefore need to use single deck buses even though an alternative route, which is signposted for high vehicles, is readily available. The cynic might think that this alternative may be adopted to show the value of the consultative process. The A205 is heavily congested at times with little in the way of bus priority measures at present – this will need addressing if the route is to show its full potential.

It will operate up to every 12 minutes between 05:00 and 01:00 daily with an end-to-end journey potentially taking just over 70 minutes. The new route will provide interchanges between 77 other bus routes and eight rail stations. No start date has been provided but its position in the tendering programme would suggest that it will be towards then end of next year.

Transport for London has confirmed that it will proceed with plans to create a new night bus route N118 (Trafalgar Square - Ruislip station). The currently suspended weekend night service on 114 (Ruislip - Mill Hill Broadway) will also be formally withdrawn (*Look in on London* July). The changes are expected to be implemented in January 2026.

HEATHROW CHRISTMAS GIFT TO BUS USERS

The number of bus routes operating to Heathrow airport on Christmas Day will increase further this year.

In addition to those routes that ran in 2024, Carousel will operate its service 102 (High Wycombe – Heathrow Central). For the first time the airport is also supporting a service over part of a route normally operated for Transport for London. Carousel will operate an hourly service on route 111 between the airport and Hanworth Road under contract to Heathrow Airport. The first bus will leave Hanworth Road at 04:12 with the last journey from the airport at 23:00. A flat fare of £2 will apply and TfL tickets (including Oyster cards) will not be accepted.

There have been no Christmas Day buses on the London bus network since 1979, although a limited commercial service was provided on some central London corridors between 1995 and 2001. Analysis undertaken for TfL in 2015 suggested that if a full Sunday service was operated, there would be around 1.2 million journeys made. This compares to 2.8m journeys made on Easter Sunday, the other day of the year on which most shops are closed.

Other options examined included providing a reduced Sunday service with lower frequencies on all routes and one in which only around a quarter of the network operated. It concluded that this would be difficult to publicise effectively. The cost:benefit ratio was assessed at between 0.27:1 for a quarter network to 0.84:1 for a reduced Sunday service between 09:00 and 21:00.

Many world capitals, including Berlin, Paris and Washington, benefit from bus services on Christmas Day, as do a growing number of UK towns and cities.

FALCON WINS TFL CONTRACT

Falcon Coaches will take over route 467 (Hook – Epsom) next September. It will not be the first time that the route has been in the hands of an independent. Epsom Buses, which branded its TfL contracts as Quality Line, ran it from September 2011. The business was acquired by RATPDev in April 2012 and fully incorporated into its London United operation in June 2021. Recalling the period when Quality Line remained a separate unit within RATP Dev, Alexander Dennis Enviro400 DD14 (SL14 LND) was seen in Ashley Road, Epsom on July 18, 2015. MARK LYONS

Falcon Coaches has been awarded a seven-year contract to operate route 467 (Hook – Epsom) from next September.

It is the Byfleet operator's first Transport for London (TfL) contract, although the Telling family, which owns Falcon, previously built up a sizeable portfolio of London bus services during its ownership of Tellings-Golden Miller.

Reversing recent losses, Stagecoach Selkent has been awarded contracts to operate routes 208 (Lewisham – Orpington) and (301 (Bexleyheath – Woolwich). Operation of route 300 (East Ham – Canning Town) will revert, within Go-Ahead London, from Docklands Buses to Blue Triangle in June next year. This will be the fifth time it has switched between the to operators since Docklands Buses first ran it in 2010. Route 16 (Brent Park Tesco – Paddington) see New Routemasters replaced by battery-electric buses.

London Transit has been awarded a three-year contract to continue operating route 13 (North Finchley – Victoria). The operator had invoked a break clause in the current contract, which was the first awarded for a seven-year period. The new contract, which ends on the same date as the current one, will see a frequency cut. Metroline will continue operating route 81 (Slough – Hounslow). In due course it will receive new battery-electric buses although no date has been set for this.

The exercising of break clauses means that the current contracts for routes 116 (Hounslow – Ashford Hospital), 186 (Northwick Park Hospital - Brent Cross), 198 (Thornton Heath – Shrublands), 613 (Tolworth –Glenthorne High School), 662/5 (Surbiton/Berrylands – New Malden) and 671 (Chessington –– Tiffin Girls' School), which started in 2022 will now end in July or August next year. Route 186 is operated by Metroline, the 116, 613, 662 and 665 by London United, 198 by Arriva London South and the 671 by Transport UK West London.

Full details of recent contract awards are in the accompanying table.

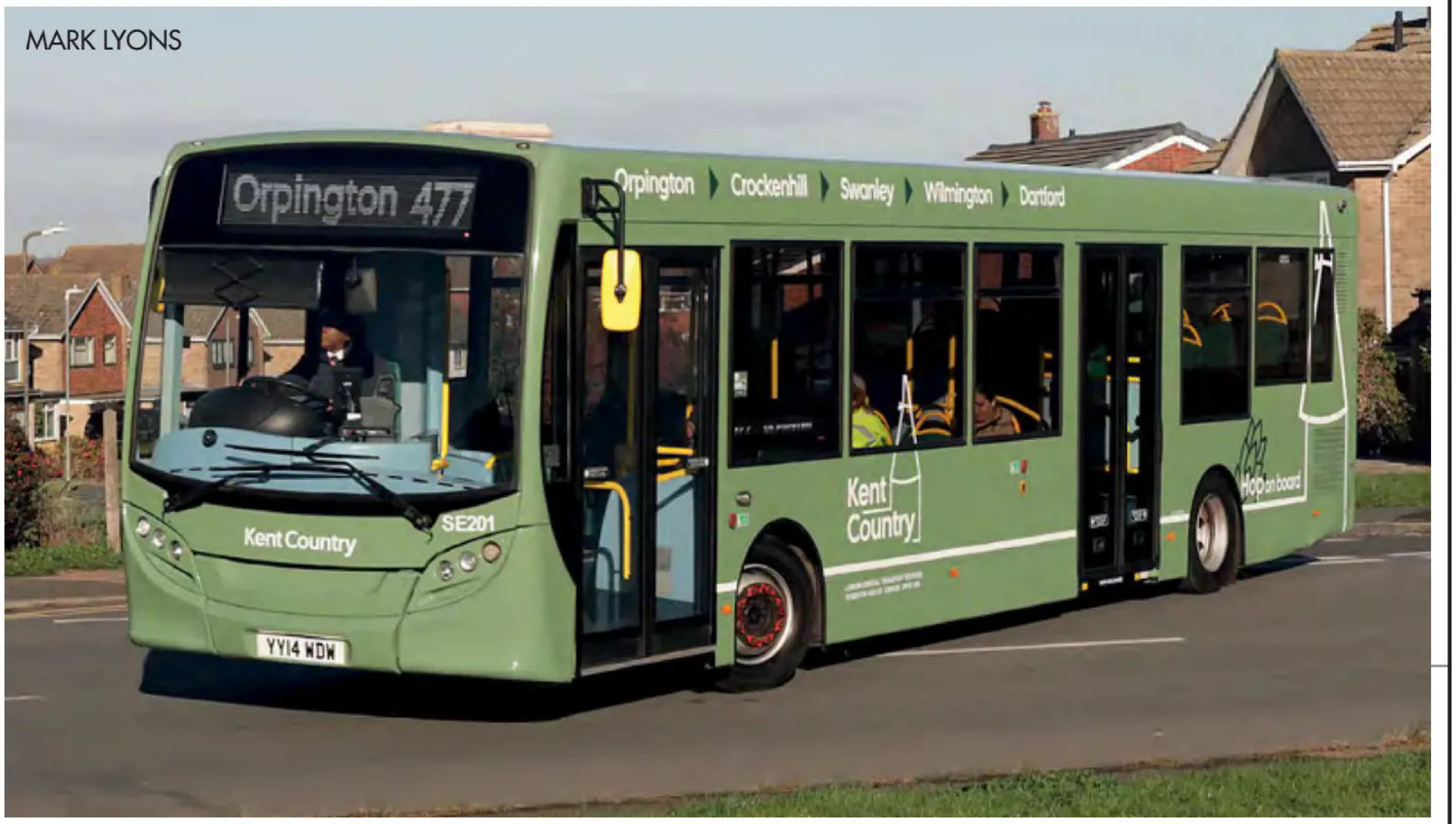
Route	Operator (current / new, if different)	Peak vehicle requirement (change on present)	Vehicles	Start date	End date
13 North Finchley - Victoria (24 hour)	London Transit	21 (-5)	Existing hybrid double deck	March 28	March 30, 2029
104 Stratford – Beckton	Blue Triangle	11 (-1)	New battery-electric double deck	June 6	June 3, 2033
300 East Ham – Canning Town	Docklands Buses / Blue Triangle	11 (+1)	New battery-electric single deck	June 6	June 3, 2033
227 Bromley North – Crystal Palace	London Central	11 (-1)	Existing diesel single deck	June 20	June 22, 2029
301 Bexleyheath - Woolwich	Arriva London North / Stagecoach Selkent	10 (-)	New battery-electric double deck	July 11	July 8, 2033
81 Slough - Hounslow	Metroline	16 (-)	New battery-electric double deck	July 25	July 22, 2033
208 Lewisham - Orpington	Metrobus / Stagecoach Selkent	17 (+1)	New battery-electric double deck	July 25	July 22, 2033
146 Bromley North - Downe	Stagecoach Selkent	1 (-)	New battery-electric single deck	August 22	August 19, 2033
336 Catford - Locksbottom	Stagecoach Selkent	11 (-)	New battery-electric single deck	August 22	August 19, 2033
490 Richmond, Pools on the Park – Heathrow Terminal 5	Transport UK West London	18 (-)	New battery-electric single deck	August 22	August 19, 2033
467 Hinchley Wood School / Hook – Epsom Hospital / Epsom High Street	London United / Falcon Coaches	2 (-)	New battery-electric double deck	September 5	September 2, 2033
P13 Streatham Station – New Cross Gate	Transport UK London	11 (-1)	New electric single deck	October 10	October 7, 2033
16 Brent Park Tesco - Paddington	Metroline	16 (+1)	New battery-electric double deck	October 10	October 7, 2033

KENT COUNTRY BEGINS OPERATIONS

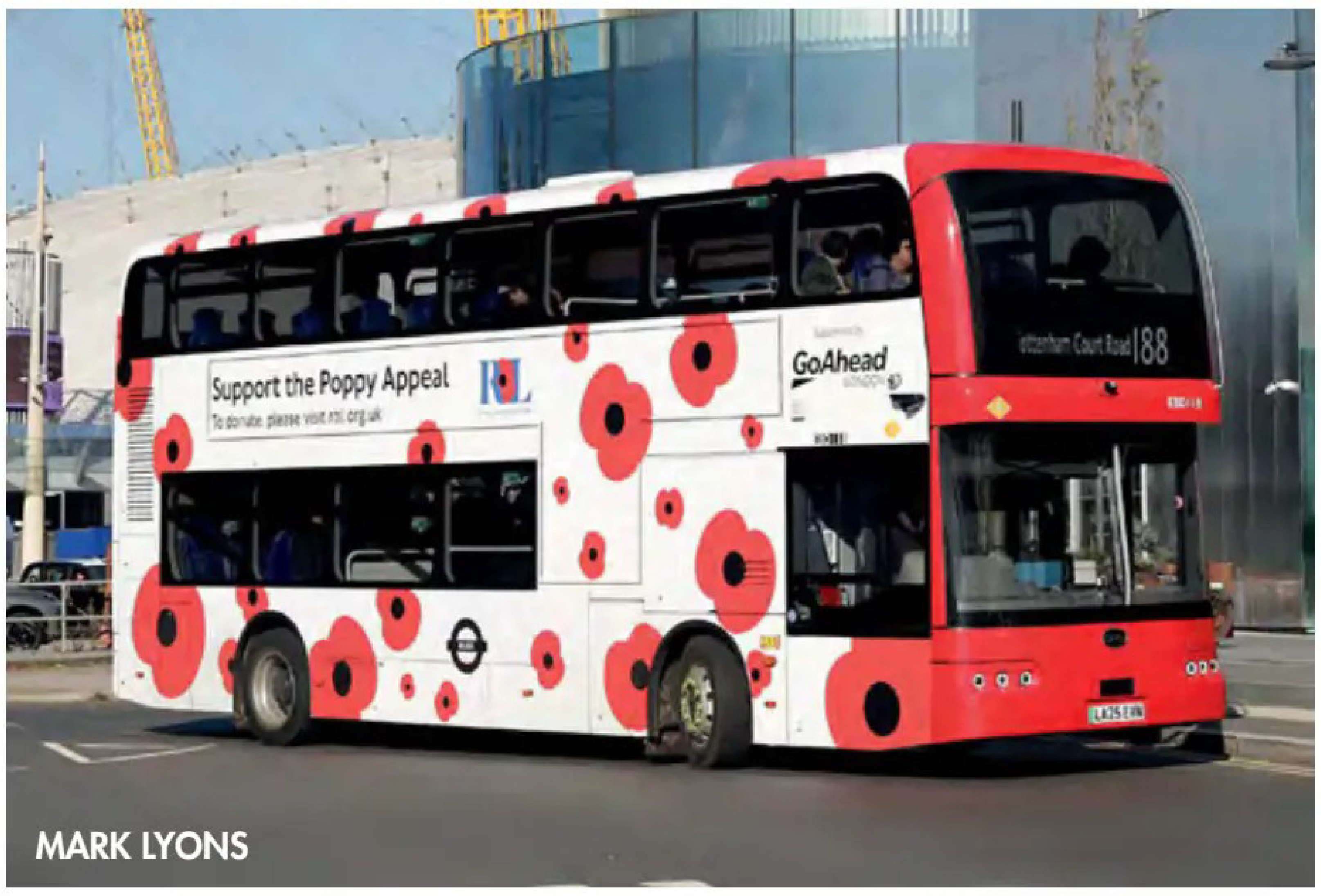
Following Arriva Kent Thameside's withdrawal from cross-London boundary route 477 (Dartford – Orpington) on October 25 (*Look in on London* last month) Go-Ahead London's replacement service began the following day.

Sporting its newly applied Kent Country livery, Alexander Dennis Enviro200 SE201 (YY14 WDW) is seen in Azalea Drive, Swanley on the first day of the new service. Go Coach is continuing to operate its own variant of the route between Dartford and Swanley.

Both operators have agreed to accept each other's day tickets.


MARK LYONS

LONDON OPERATORS SUPPORT POPPY APPEAL


MARK LYONS

Eight buses operating Transport for London services have received wraps to promote the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. Go-Ahead London BYD BD11 EBD118 (LA25 EVN) is seen at North Greenwich on October 24.

BYDS ORDERED FOR SL7

Go-Ahead London has ordered 25 BYD BD11 battery-electric double deck buses for route SL7 (Heathrow Airport – West Croydon), London's longest daytime bus route.

They will have a single entry/exit door and be fitted with a luggage rack on the lower deck. This is expected to be two metres long compared to the three metre racks on the 11 Wrightbus-bodied Volvo B9TLs converted to single door configuration for use on what was then route X26 in 2017.

In 2023 the route was relaunched as part of the Superloop and its frequency doubled. To resource this, a further 12 buses received smaller one-metre luggage racks and retained their dual door configuration. Subject to confirming the seating capacity, delivery of the new buses is expected by late spring 2026.

MAYOR DEFENDS SILVERTOWN TUNNEL CYCLE SERVICE

Questioned in the London Assembly the mayor of London, Sir Sadiq Khan, has defended the provision of a dedicated bus, route SCS, to transport cyclists through the Silvertown Tunnel. The mayor was asked whether the £43 cost per passenger using the service represented value for money.

The mayor replied that the service was provided as cycling is not possible through the tunnel. He added that it had received some positive feedback and TfL continued to promote it. He hoped that as people become more aware of the service usage would increase. He said that route SCS responded to a planning condition, although the Silvertown Tunnel Order 2018 simply places an obligation on TfL to provide enhanced river crossing facilities for cyclists and pedestrians between the Greenwich Peninsula and Canary Wharf/Silvertown for at least three years whether by bus shuttles, ferry services and/or a modified charging policy on the cross-river cable car service.

Transport for London's (TfL) data shows that, apart from during its first week of operation, daily passenger numbers on the SCS have not exceeded 139 with an average of 125. There are 152 daily journeys on the route which has been contracted to Stagecoach East London at an annual cost of £1,967,010.

The SCS is the fastest bus route in London. In the four-week period from August 16, buses averaged 17.86mph. Across the rest of the network bus speeds have continued to fall. In the same period, they were 9.2mph compared to 9.34mph last year and 9.4mph in 2015. The speed of buses on the Superloop network has also fallen. They ranged from 8.23mph for the peak hour only SL6 (Russell Square – West Croydon) to 14.64mph for the SL3 (Thamesmead – Bromley North) down from 9.11mph to 14.87mph a year ago.

SHORT HOPS

- By the end of September, 735 of the 996-strong New Routemaster bus fleet had been refurbished.
- Transport for London replaced Westminster City Council as the highway authority for Oxford Street on September 20 when the street became part of the Transport for London Road Network. The move is a key part of the mayor of London's pedestrianisation plans.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN WALES & THE WEST 2026

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CRAIG HAMPTON-STONE
Managing Director
Cardiff Bus

RICHARD STEVENS
Managing Director,
Go South West

NEILL BIRCH
Business Director,
SYSTRA

GEMMA LELLIOTT
Wales Director/Head of Advice
& Support, Community
Transport Association

PAM TURTON
Director of Bus West of England
Combined Authority

CHRIS HANSON
Managing Director of
Stagecoach West & Oxford Tube

SIMON CUBITT
Commercial Director Bus
and Coach VEV

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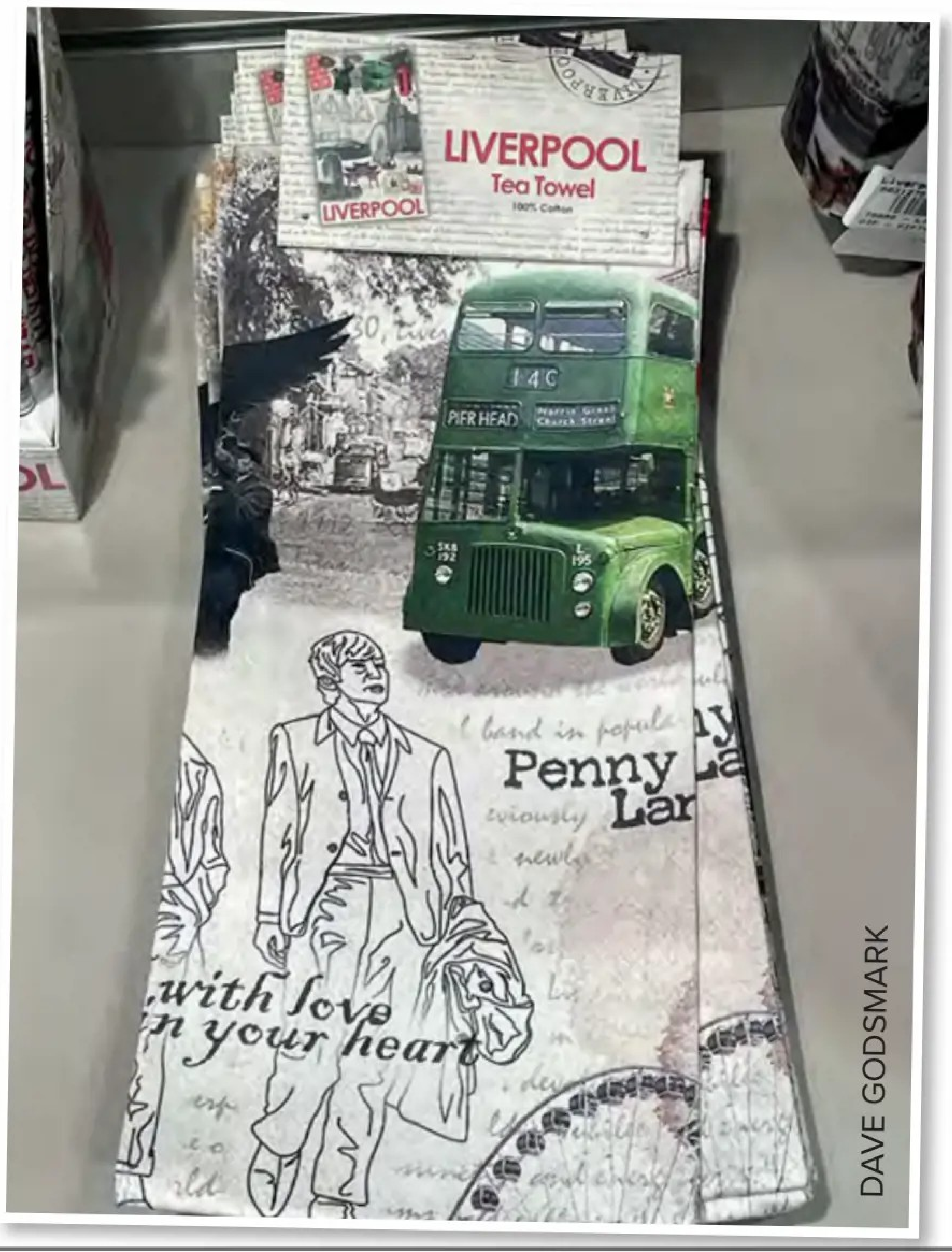
911/25

Please send any stories, photos, (digital, prints or slides), cuttings and other information of off beat bus matters direct to **alan.millar@keypublishing.com**

Titan of tea towel, tote bag and other temptation



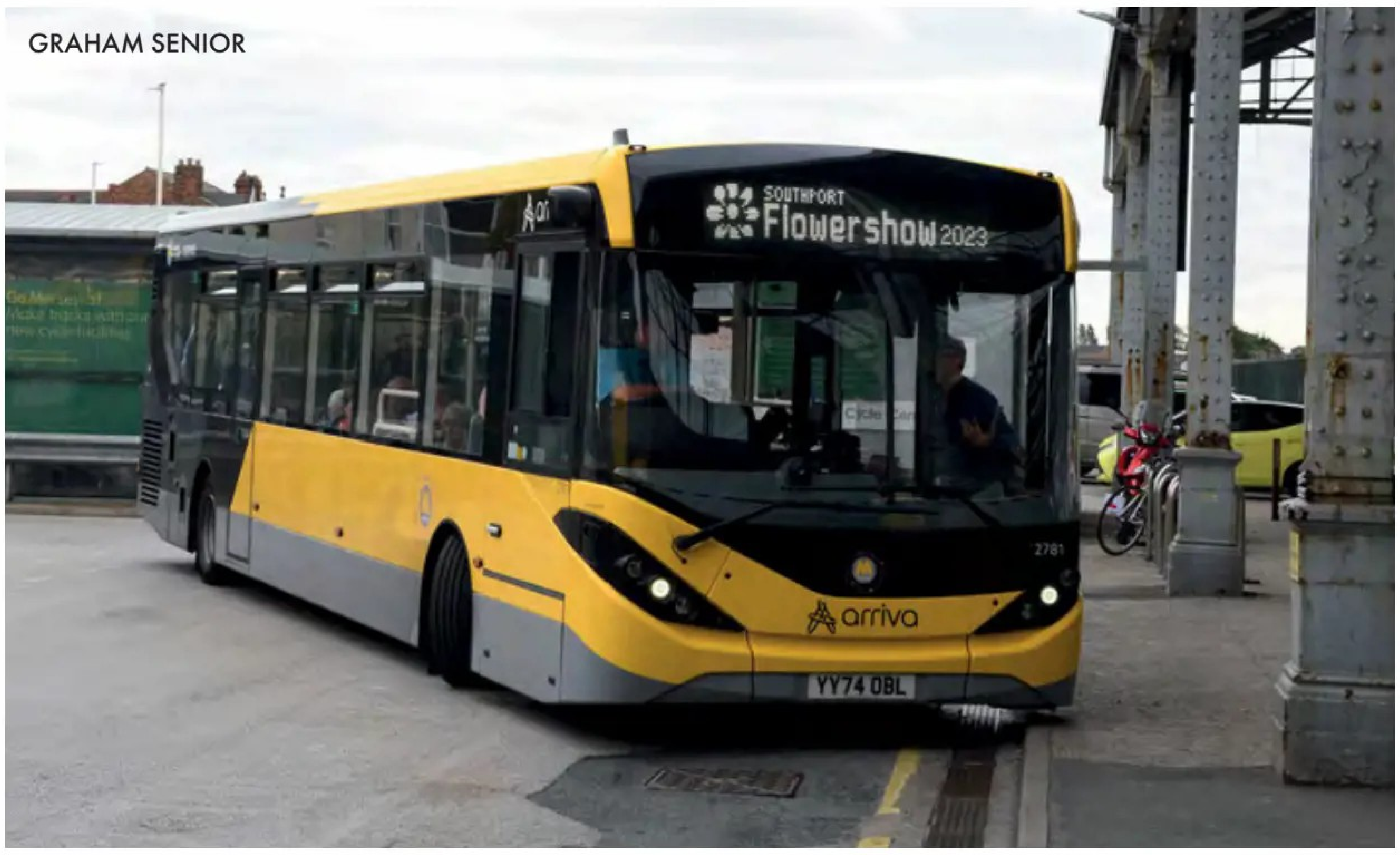
DAVE GODSMARK

Good to see that a green corporation double-decker features prominently along with such other icons of Liverpool as the Beatles and the Liver Building which Dave Godsmark spotted on souvenirs for sale at the city's Anglican cathedral, which figures in the design.

Besides this tea towel, the design also was available on a plate and a tote bag.

The photograph of the bus is a contemporary one probably shot in the 1960s, rather than one taken recently of a preserved example.

It shows L195 (SKB 192), a Weymann Orion-bodied Leyland Titan PD2/20 new in 1955 as the bus fleet was expanding to replace the corporation's trams. It has the bonnet and grille design that Liverpool specified first on this batch of 35, with more nearside kerb visibility for the driver and a unique style of grille.



GRAHAM SENIOR

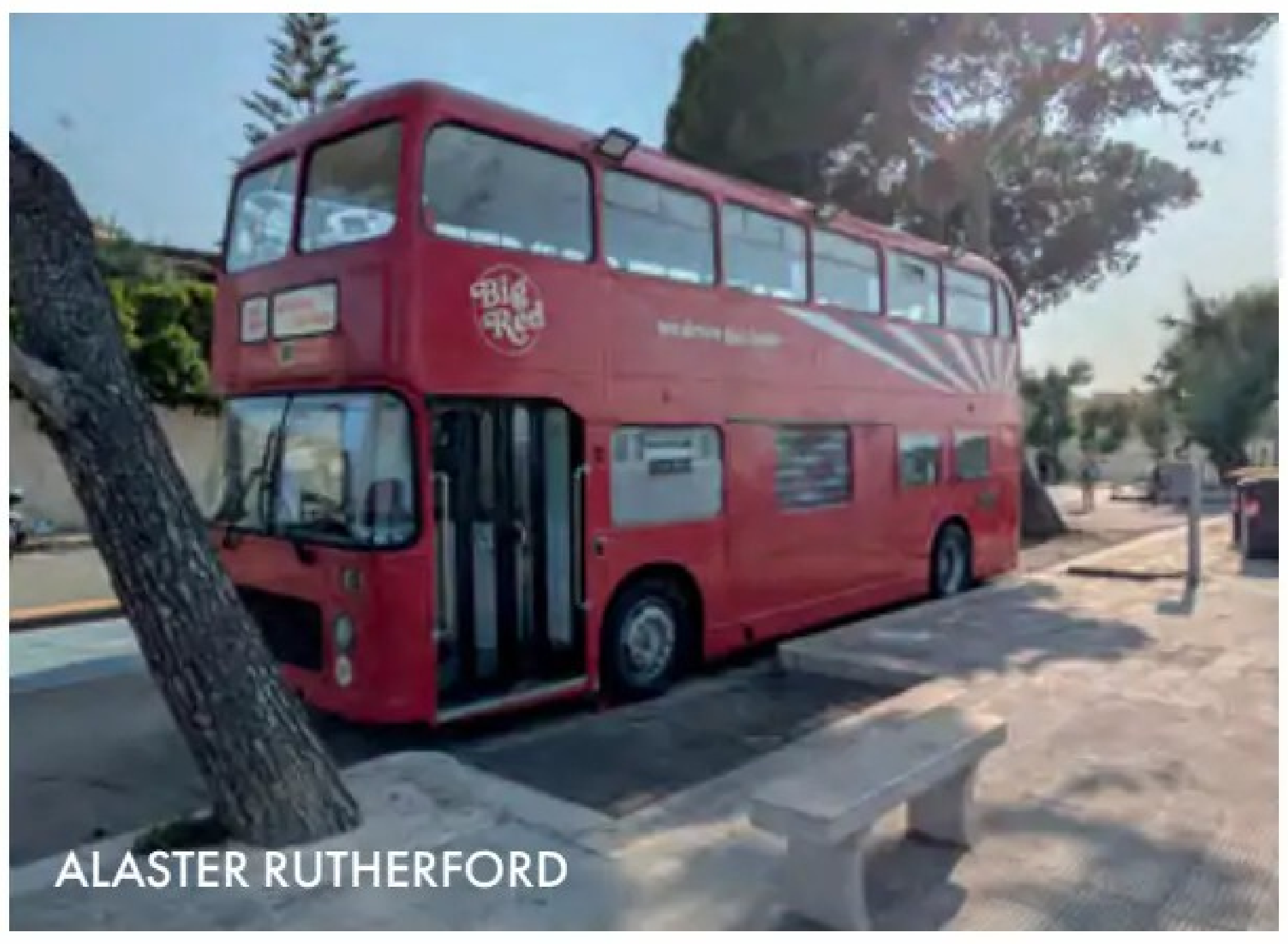
Arriva travels Southport back in time

Some opponents of bus service franchising dismiss the various mayors' plans as a step back in time, specifically to the 1970s when the passenger transport executives (PTEs) ruled the roost in what they see as a monolithic way.

That belief might have been strengthened had they attended the first morning of the recent Southport Flower Show where three of the latest Alexander Dennis Enviro200s in the local Arriva fleet worked a shuttle service from the railway station, all of them painted in the yellow, black and grey livery that Liverpool City Region's combined authority is introducing ready for franchising.

The livery may owe something to the one that PTE Merseytravel mandated for some tendered services in the 1990s, but the time travelling that caught Graham Senior's attention didn't go back 30 or even 50 years, but two. Someone had the inspirational idea of setting up the electronic destination displays to show the name of the event, but forgot that this is 2025 and not 2023. We all make mistakes, and all credit to someone at Arriva for spotting this one and correcting the displays by the start of business on the second day.

United VR flips beefy burgers

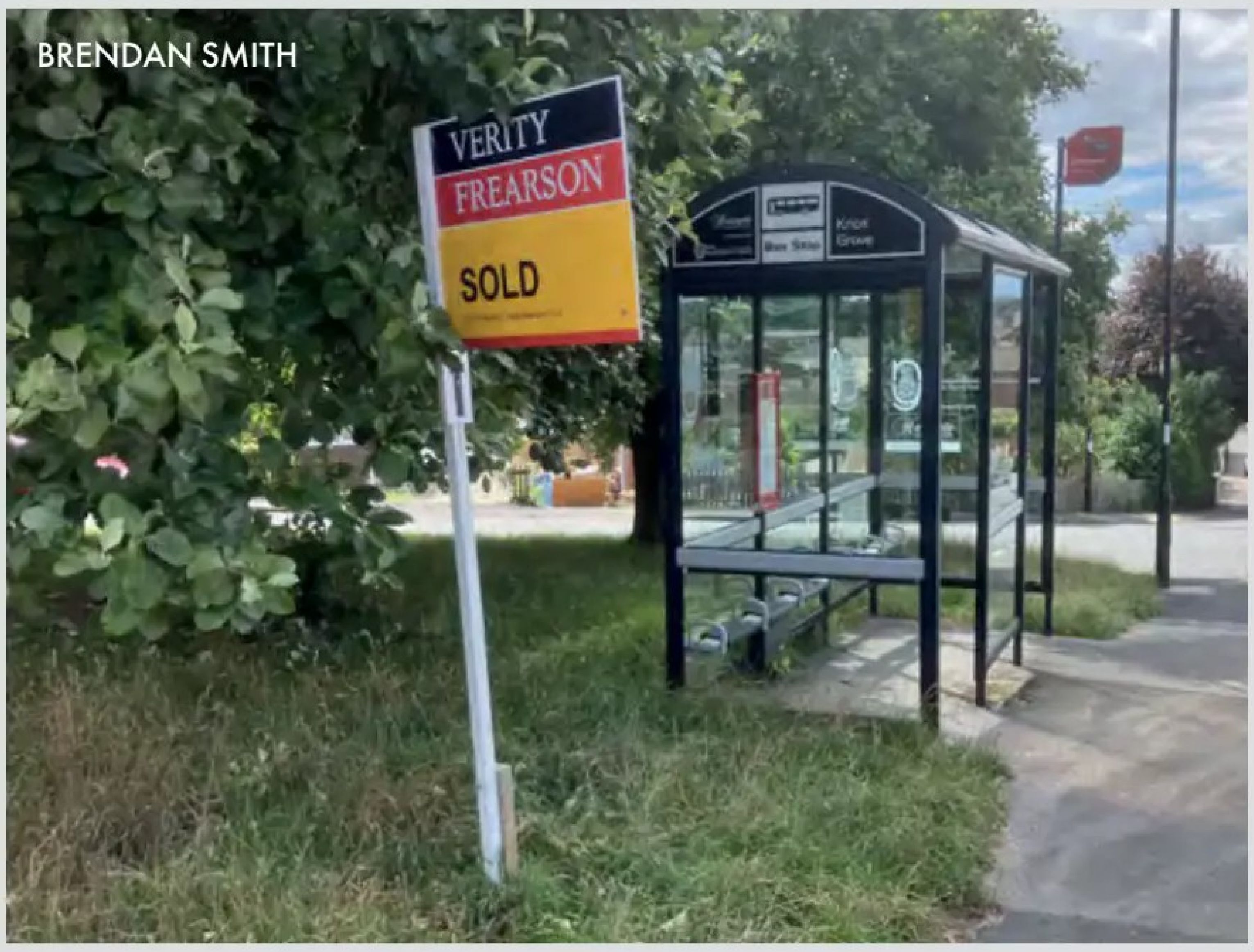


ALASTER RUTHERFORD

Old Bristol VRs don't all die or even fade away. Some become catering units, like this Gardner-engined VRT/SL3 that Alaster Rutherford discovered by the Adriatic last summer, turned into a burger bar and still standing after 50 years.

New to United Auto in 1975 as its 672 (MGR 672P), it served its original owner for 15 years and spent ten years after that with Hedingham Omnibuses in Essex. It was owned by preservationists for a further ten years before being exported to Italy in 2011 and converted for a venture that promoted this red double-decker as a source of London street food.

That seemed to have ended in the Covid pandemic and Alaster found it in the village of Trani, close to the south-eastern heel of Italy, promoting itself as the Big Red burger bar.



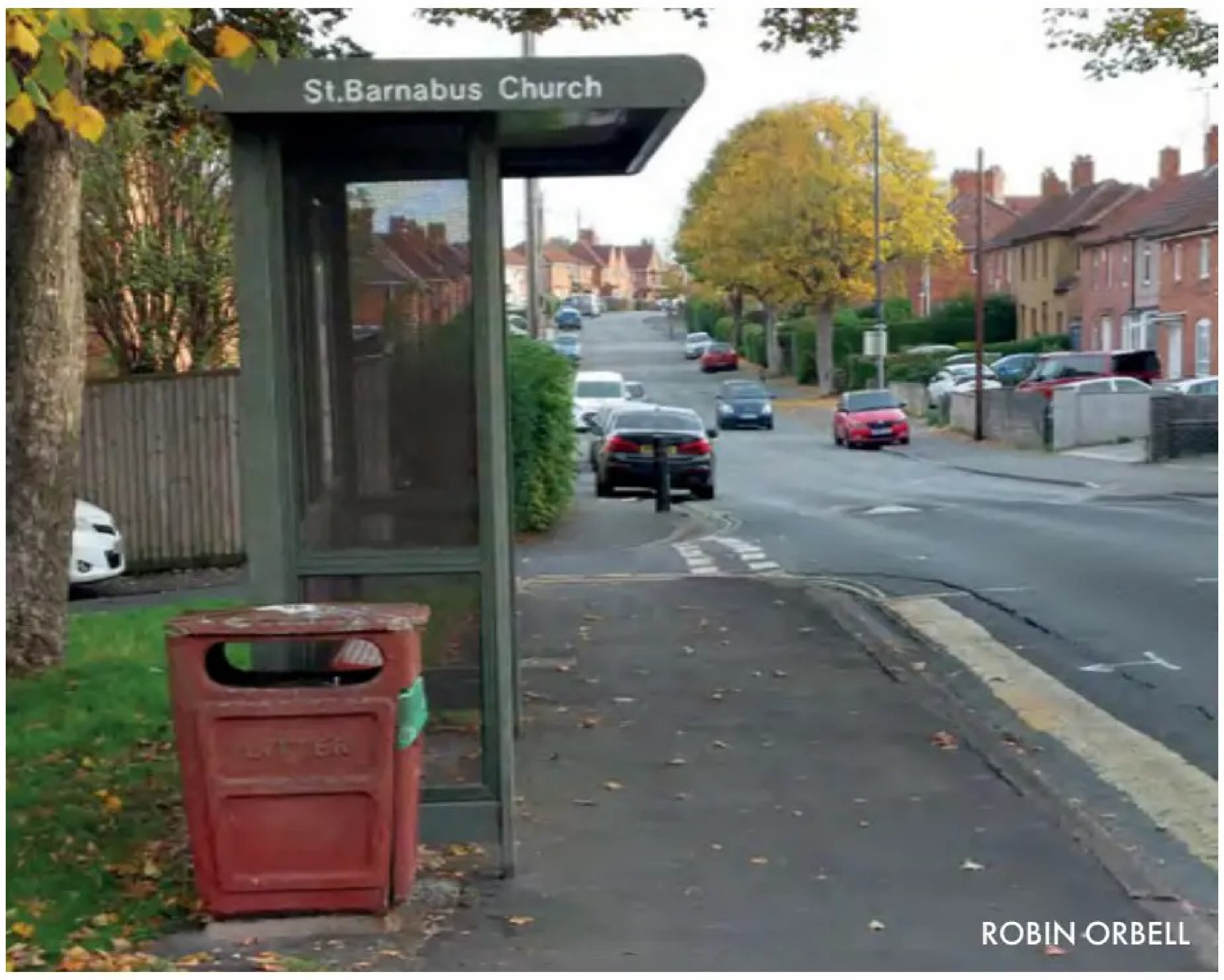
BRENDAN SMITH

Sign of a sale at Harrogate shelter

Brendan Smith was surprised to find not only that The Harrogate Bus Company has parted company with its initial electric fleet of Volvo 7900Es, but that North Yorkshire County Council appeared to have sold one of the stops they served to the highest bidder.

Did the estate agent's board on Knox Avenue at Knox Grove really refer to the shelter used by service 2 (Bilton-Knox) and was this a novel way of funding rural bus services? On looking more closely, he spotted an arrow on the post, directly below the flag, pointing up Knox Grove, which runs behind the bus shelter. "I'm sure local passengers and The Harrogate Bus Company will have breathed a sigh of relief," he says.

Is this our patron saint?



ROBIN ORBELL

You may recognise St Christopher as the patron saint of travellers and St Anthony as the patron saint of lost property that, among many other places, is separated from its owners aboard buses, but is there a patron saint of buses themselves?

Robin Orwell, a former National Bus Company man whose later career included directorships at Eastern National and Western Greyhound, thinks it could be St Barnabus, as bus is incorporated in his canonised name which appears on a shelter in Bristol, outside a church, carrying the saint's name. It's in Daventry Road in Knowle West, served by First services 16 and 36.

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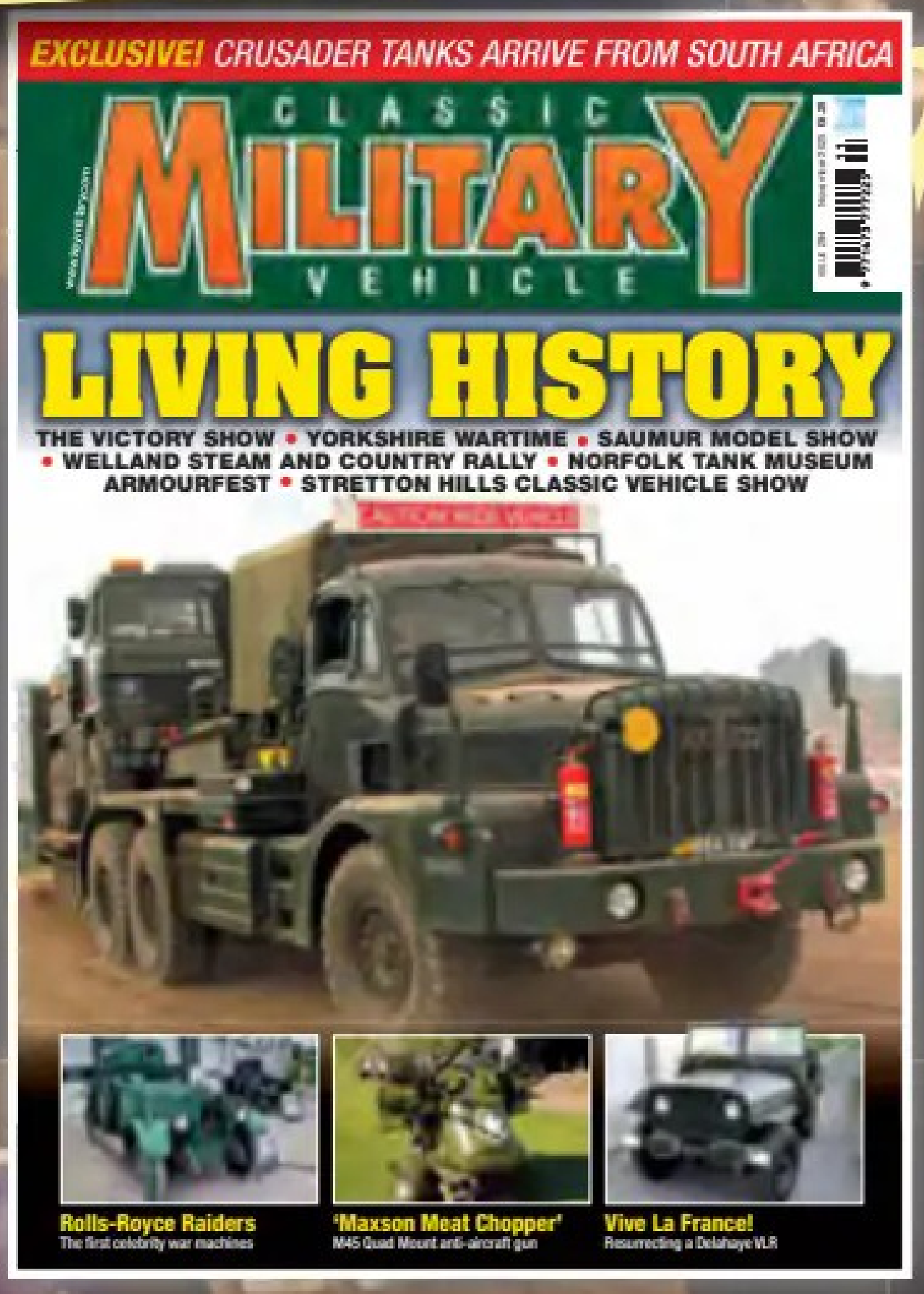
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Mobico sells more companies to Coach Travel Group

The Coach Travel Group has acquired most of the remaining non-scheduled coaching activities of financially-challenged Mobico.

It has purchased Kings Ferry, Lucketts Travel and Worthing Coaches, as well as the associated Clarkes of London business, which no longer has its own operator licence, adding around 95 vehicles to the group.

Mobico had half-heartedly rebranded some vehicles as National Express Travel Solutions, but Coach Travel Group's CEO Tom Stables said: "We are committed to restoring each operator's local identity".

The newly-acquired subsidiaries will continue to operate scheduled coach services on behalf of National Express, although the latter will maintain its own base in Bournemouth.

The deal leaves the Woods of Leicester business as the last non-scheduled coaching subsidiary of Mobico, while Coach Travel Group now employs around 700 people and runs more than 450 vehicles.

Worthing
Driver on Break
BU18 YTW
Rebalance WELLNESS CENTRE

Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BU18 YTW began life at Kings Ferry, before passing via West Midlands Travel and Woods Coaches to Worthing Coaches, where it was recently debranded from National Express Travel Solutions livery. When found in Brighton in October, it was laying over between National Express duties. DAVID JENKINS

Long Ashton 505
Stagecoach
SN69 ZGY

Stagecoach's Bristol operations include service 505 from Southmead Hospital to Long Ashton park-&-ride site, avoiding the city centre. Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 37628 (SN69 ZGY) arrives at the latter earlier this year; from December, the depot in Patchway will be controlled from South Wales. DAVID JENKINS

Stagecoach restructures for franchising

Stagecoach has announced changes to the geographical coverage of some subsidiaries, as it seeks to align businesses with expected franchising regimes.

Stagecoach Manchester becomes Manchester & Merseyside, adding the two depots in the Liverpool City Region (Gillmoss and Rock Ferry) along with that at Chester. Operations at Preston and its Chorley outstation are transferred to Stagecoach Cumbria and North Lancashire, leading to the abolition of the current Stagecoach Merseyside and South Lancashire subsidiary.

Stagecoach West is ceding control of Bristol operations to Stagecoach South Wales. Most of the dozen or so services run by the depot are contracted to the West of England Combined Authority, which has yet to declare its position on franchising, although is under public pressure to do so. Wales is expected to adopt franchising from 2027.

Stagecoach says that the changes will bring "teams together to maximise synergies and learn from our experiences throughout the franchise process including bidding, contract negotiation, mobilisation and demobilisation".

CPT warns over budget pressures

The Confederation of Passenger Transport has warned the Treasury that bus and coach operators "cannot absorb any further tax hits without cutting day-to-day bus services".

It says that the impact of increases to National Insurance employer contributions in April has added around £100m to operating costs across the industry, on top of driver pay inflation which is significantly higher than the average for UK wages.

Drivers now earn nearly 30% more than they did three years ago, compared to a general increase in wages of 21% over the same period. CPT says that research for its Cost Monitor index shows that the cost of running a bus has increased by 17% per kilometre over two years.

CPT also warns that there is uncertainty over the levels of reimbursement received for the £3 fare cap, with details of amounts for 2026 not yet notified to operators. It says that the most likely response by operators would be to reduce services, "which would become simply too expensive to deliver".

The trade body is also calling for more help to give the coach sector "its fair share of zero emission infrastructure", as part of a more equitable transition across all parts of the transport sector.

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Majority shareholding purchased in Go-Ahead parent

Kinetic 440 (9040 AO) in Melbourne. It carries a "Transport Victora" livery as Kinetic operates services under contract to them. The vehicle is seen in February 2023. MARK LYONS

Asset management firm Texas Pacific Group (TPG) has taken a controlling stake in Kinetic, Go-Ahead's largest shareholder since June 2022.

Kinetic is the largest mass transit operator in Australasia, and owns a 51% stake in Go-Ahead Group. Including Go-Ahead's operations, its network includes over 12,000 buses, along with more than 400 trains, 36,000 employees and 200 depots.

TPG has signed an agreement to acquire a 70% equity interest in Kinetic.

As part of the agreement, OPTrust will exit its shareholding, while Foresight Group will retain a 30% stake. The agreement is subject to regulatory approvals and is expected to be finalised in the coming months.

TPG Rise Climate is the dedicated climate investing platform of TPG, and it is understood that the investment firm has taken a particularly keen interest in Kinetic's operation of zero emission vehicles.

Buses launches Wales & the West conference

Buses has launched another conference, following on from the success of six similar events in the North of England and Scotland.

Public Transport in Wales & the West 2026 will take place at the Radisson Blue Hotel in Cardiff from Tuesday March 24 to Wednesday March 25, 2026, in partnership with *Buses*' sister magazine, *Modern Railways*. The first of the two days will focus on rail, with buses being to focus on the second day.

Gemma Lelliott, Wales Director / Head of Advice and Support at the Community Transport Association, is the latest confirmed speaker, joining what is already a strong line-up.

Other confirmed speakers are:

- Craig Hampton-Stone, Managing Director of Cardiff Bus;
- Richard Stevens, Managing Director of Go South West;
- Chris Hanson, Managing Director of Stagecoach West & Oxford Tube;
- James Price, CEO of Transport for Wales;
- Pam Turton, Director of Bus at the West of England Combined Authority;
- Miki Szikszai, Chief Executive of Snapper Services;
- Neill Birch, Business Director at Systra; and
- Simon Cubitt, Commercial Director Bus and Coach at VEV.

Headline sponsor for the event is Alexander Dennis, with Ticketer sponsoring lunch.

To book a delegate place at the event, contact Caroline Barnes on 01780 663011 Ext: 110, or email *caroline.barnes@keypublishing.com*.

More information can be found online at *keybuses.com/events/public-transport-wales-and-west*

Tower Transit purchases South Wales Transport

South Wales Transport of Swansea has become the latest bus operator to become part of Tower Transit, the UK arm of Kelsian Group. It follows the acquisition of Merseyside independent operator Huyton Travel in February.

Both acquisitions are likely strategic, taking place in areas with bus franchising on the way. South West Wales is expected to be the first part of the country to see bus franchising in 2027. It makes Kelsian one of the first operating groups not previously active in Wales to take in interest in the new franchising market there, similar to Metroline's entry in Manchester.

Both the South Wales Transport brand and its current leadership team, led by Managing Director David Fowles – the son of founder Bev Fowles, are to be retained. A fleet of 47 vehicles, including both buses and coaches, will transfer with the deal.

South Wales Transport was founded in 2004 and holds a standard international operator's licence for 50 vehicles.

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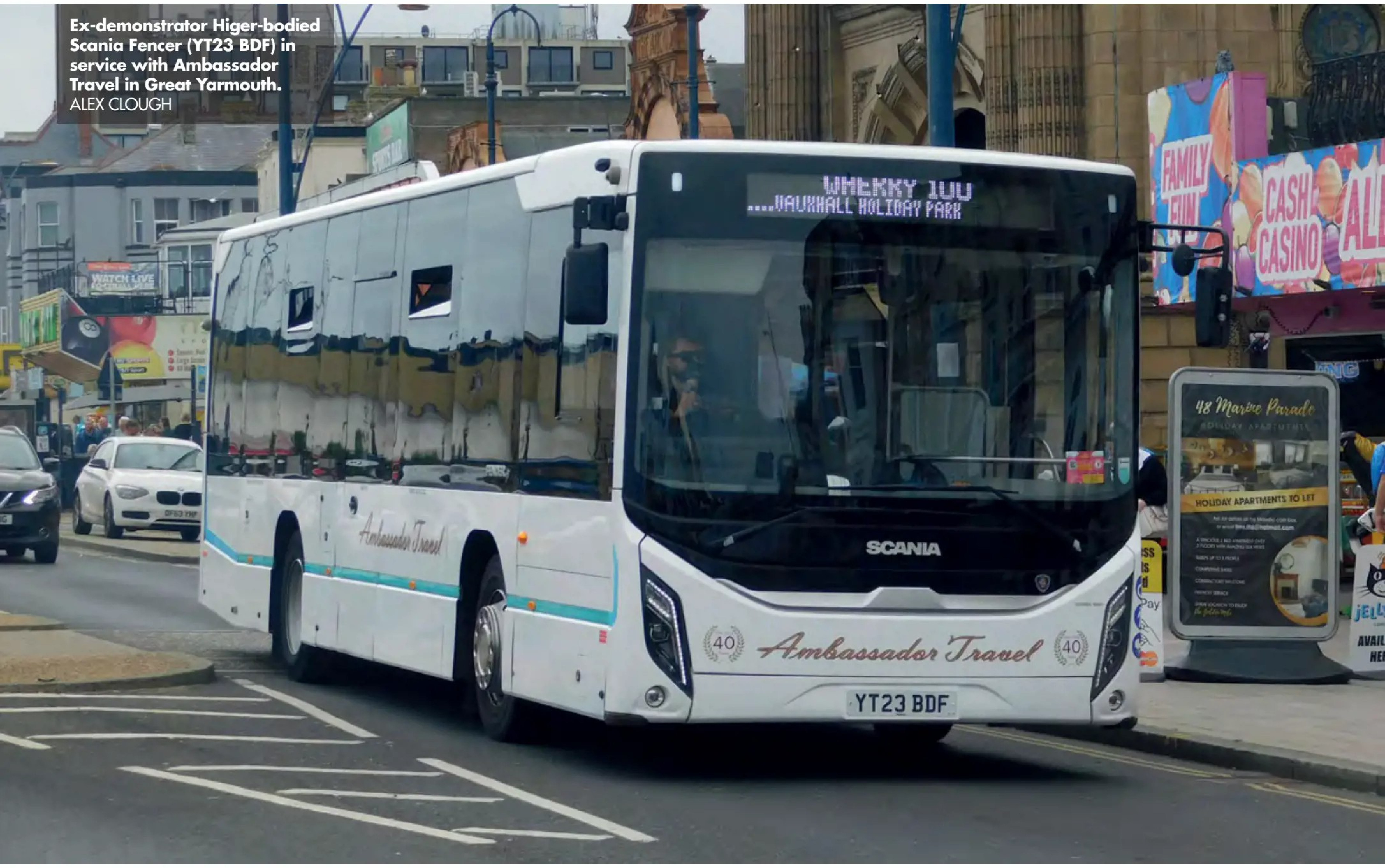


Ex-demonstrator Higer-bodied Scania Fencer (YT23 BDF) in service with Ambassador Travel in Great Yarmouth. ALEX CLOUGH

ROADMAP TO RETURN

In the last of *Buses'* Manufacturer Series articles, **JAMES DAY** speaks to Mark Oliver of Scania UK about a major relaunch of Scania products for the UK market, including zero emission vehicles.

From the perspective of the UK's bus and coach market, Scania has been relatively quiet in recent years. The Fencer bus range, bodied by Higer and launched in 2021, has not taken significant market share in the UK, though Scania chassis are still sold on a regular basis to UK coach operators, with a number of different bodywork providers.

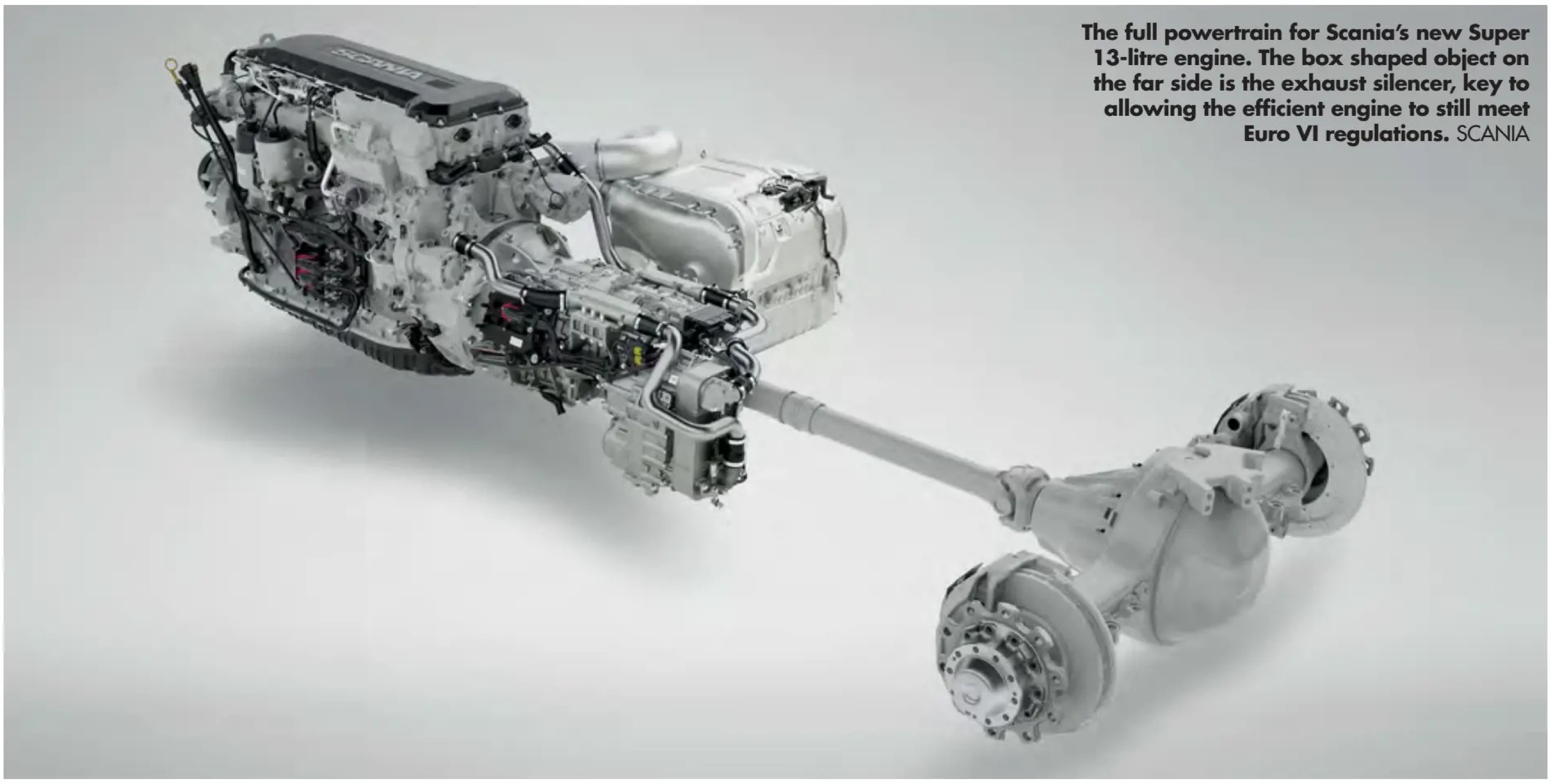
However, Scania GB is gearing up for a major range expansion in the UK. There were five vehicles brought to Busworld Brussels this year (see report from page 34). While in most cases, vehicles on display at the trade show are not applicable for the UK market, this time, four out of five are expected to arrive on this side of the channel. Indeed, one of the vehicles was presented in right-hand drive, and will be brought to right-hand drive markets before the rest of the world.

I spoke to Mark Oliver, Sales Director for Power Solutions, Bus and Coach and at Scania UK, who explained what can be expected to arrive in the UK over the next couple of years.

The charging point on the Scania HF EV with Caetano e.Levante body at Busworld. ALAN MILLAR

Taking time

Oliver admitted that Scania is not always the first to market. The organisation prefers to have control of the full drivetrain on its vehicles, bringing in as little third-party equipment as possible. With the industry gradually making the transition to zero emission, this presented a particular challenge, with Scania wishing to update its modular vehicles to support motors, electric transmissions and batteries it had assembled itself, as well as updating its combustion engines.



The full powertrain for Scania's new Super 13-litre engine. The box shaped object on the far side is the exhaust silencer, key to allowing the efficient engine to still meet Euro VI regulations. SCANIA

Cybersecurity was highlighted as a particular concern, as modern, more digitally connected vehicles are vulnerable to hacking. Scania therefore wanted complete control of its electrical architecture, to ensure it could move forward with new advancements and ensure it was comfortable with the digital security on its vehicles.

The company has become primarily a manufacturer of chassis and engines. It produced more than 110,000 engines in 2023, with applications ranging from trucks and buses to marine vessels and static rock crushers.

The company works with many bodywork providers on its buses and coaches, instead of producing its own. The Omni bodies have not been available in the UK for over a decade, and the Citywide which replaced the OmniCity on the continent did not make an appearance in the UK. Scania has also ceased producing integral finished coaches, such as the OmniExpress.

This has allowed the company to place complete focus on its next generation drives, which look to offer some impressive advancements.

While Scania does not have an electric citybus or coach available for the UK market today, this doesn't mean it has not been working on electrification. Ethanol-powered series hybrids were first offered for sale in 2009 in Europe, while the first battery electric bus from the company launched in 2017.

"As a sales organisation, Scania UK does not have pressure from Sweden to sell what is not applicable to our market," Oliver said. "The decision was made that we will bring an electric vehicle to market at the point we have one commercially right for the customer."

In 2023, Scania displayed a low-entry battery electric vehicle at Busworld Brussels, but Scania UK judged that while the product was 90% there, it didn't fully meet its specifications for the UK.

"Knowing what was down the line, we felt there was no point in rushing," Oliver continued. "We want the right product for our market, with the right bodybuilder."

Next generation diesel

A truck engine launched in November 2021 is now being brought to Scania's coach chassis, with a big claim of an 8% fuel saving on the previous iteration when Scania's engine, gearbox and rear axle are used in harmony. This is a conservative figure from Scania - UK truck testing has seen fuel savings closer to 11% across a sample size of 942 vehicles.

"Usually, Scania's new technology is first launched onto a truck and later cascaded to bus, coach and Power Solutions," Oliver explained. "Sometimes Power Solutions develops an engine first which is later used elsewhere."

Scania's vehicles have a modular product structure, which allows developments on one part of the drivetrain to be substituted in instead of a decade or more being required to overhaul the entire drive system. For example, an improved transmission can be coupled to an existing engine and rear axle if the development in this area is ahead, because all of these components have common interfaces and mounting points.

For diesel bus and coach, engine options are 7, 9 and 13 litre. The most recent development is on the 13-litre, with 420, 460 and 500hp power options, the latter two of which can be run on biodiesel.

The six cylinder 13-litre engine has 50% brake thermal efficiency, meaning 50% of energy going into the engine is lost as noise and heat. While this sounds inefficient, it is a strong statistic in the context of the internal combustion engine, which has historically used around 30% of fuel energy for motive power for most of the past century. Scania's engine broke this barrier just a few years after Formula 1 achieved similar efficiency.

Silencing emissions

Helping the engine to achieve this efficiency is an emissions silencer, optimising its inlet and exhaust profiles.

The engine burns diesel at high cylinder pressures of 250bar. While burning diesel at these temperatures means greater efficiency, it also produces more harmful nitrous oxides (NOx). To tackle this, two doses of AdBlue are required, which ensure the engine meets the Euro VI emission standard.

Oliver said the engine is designed to suit Scania's low rev high torque direct drive philosophy. "We want to give the driver as much torque as possible to make the vehicle as usable as possible, but if we can deliver that at low revs, the vehicle will use less fuel.

"Combined with this is a gearbox which can run in direct drive - one gear below top gear. Torque goes all the way through the gearbox without any reduction or gain taking place."

The silencer unit adds AdBlue in the exhaust manifold immediately after the turbo. The gases are then filtered in the first of three chambers. In the second chamber, more mixing takes place with another addition of AdBlue, before a third chamber with an AdBlue catalyst. The exhaust gas coming out after this treatment is significantly cleaner than a Euro V vehicle.

The tradeoff is that more than twice as much AdBlue is required - around 11 litres per 100 litres of diesel. Larger AdBlue tanks have been added to assist with this, ensuring drivers do not need to top up AdBlue at motorway services when halfway through their diesel fuel. Oliver claimed that this is still the most effective option, because AdBlue remains cheaper than diesel fuel.

Further drive innovations

Another feature on the new engine is the option for a new auxiliary braking system called a compression release brake. This can either complement a retarder as an additional auxiliary brake, or be used instead of one. It works by allowing the engine to operate as an air compressor to provide a braking effect, by forcing air into the engine.

Scania's figures state that the braking force provided by this system amounts to 300kW. This is higher than the 150kW delivered by an exhaust brake, but lower than the sustained 400kW (with 500kW peaks) which a retarder offers. However, where a retarder adds over 100kg to the weight of the vehicle, the compression release brake adds just 7kg.

The transmission offered for the 13-litre is the familiar Scania automated manual gearbox, Opticruise. This is available with two different torque tolerances, with the higher of the two, the G33, designed to cope with the higher torque produced by the most potent 500hp engine.

The new GW Series Opticruise offers a modest 1% fuel saving over the previous generation, while weighing 60kg less. It also has a 60% increase in gear ratio spread. Oliver said this means it could be driven from a standing start on flat terrain without using first and second gear at all.

The use of a planetary gearset allows the gearbox to be 150mm shorter than previously, and allows eight reverse gears. Much of the weight savings made are due to this change, which has allowed the removal of half of the Opticruise's synchronizers and the previous reverse gears. This has also removed an idler gear from the gearbox, which had previously resulted in a parasitic loss when reverse gears were not in use.

The required oil for the transmission has also been reduced, thanks to a rigid pipe which sprays oil onto each individual gear, instead of relying on slosh and splash to lubricate the system, though there is still an element of self lubrication.

Diesel bodywork

Two start of production right-hand drive coach chassis have been allocated to Scania UK, and the next question is what bodywork will appear on them.

The Scania Touring is built in cooperation with Higer in China, and Scania has a 30-year relationship with Irizar. The manufacturer has also been supplying chassis to Caetano since 2008, primarily for National Express work.

Chiltern Travel
SCANIA
T77 HWT

Chiltern Travel Higer-bodied Scania Touring T77 HWT visiting Glasgow in October. ALAN MILLAR

"Our key strategy for the UK market is to ensure we work with body manufacturers with a similar progressive approach towards the body as we have for the chassis," Olver said. "We need the same desire for an efficient and technically advanced vehicle from our body partner."

While a final decision has not been made, it is likely one of the two initial coaches will be bodied by Irizar.

A new hybrid

Another new vehicle on the way for the UK market is the PHEV, or Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle. Hybrid coaches are not something Scania has brought to the UK previously, though they have seen some success in Spain, Italy and other European markets with more scheduled services.

The chassis is expected to launch in June 2026. The vehicle will offer two power options for its diesel engine - 13-litre 420hp or 460hp - along with the EM (Electric Machine) GE281 motor system, delivering 290kW (388hp) of power.

A 55-seater coach was presented at Busworld with an Irizar i6 body. A right-hand drive chassis is on order, also bodied by Irizar.

The hybrid coach is not being pitched as a stepping stone to electrification for coach operators. It is targeting operators who would benefit from a zero-emission element for accessing ULEZ regions, while providing the range assurance of a diesel engine. Scania's Zone & Geofencing system will assist with this, switching to pure electric power when the vehicle crosses a predesignated boundary.

"There is no zero emission funding for coach, despite years of the industry lobbying for it," Oliver said.

"This could be an opportunity for coach operators to take advantage of emission legislation and franchising, and meet their own environmental targets.

"The coach could have a second life in a school environment, where I'm sure environmental policies will be brought in eventually."

The hybrid components, which include a pair of electric motors, adds 890kg to the coach. The pair of motors was judged to get the vehicle to cruising speed more quickly, with less energy and in a smoother manner.

The coach will naturally be more expensive than a standard diesel, but with the fuel savings Scania claims it will make, it has said the break even point will come after three years or less.

Electric coach

The headliner from Scania's Busworld line-up was the battery electric coach, expected in the UK in the middle part of 2026 for demonstrations. The initial bodywork was Caetano e.Levante at 14.3m. While Caetano coach bodies have become synonymous with National Express, the company will not have exclusivity on this vehicle.

Unusually for Busworld, the vehicle on show was in right-hand drive, as the UK market has been put ahead of left-hand drive markets for this new vehicle. Scania UK persuaded the Swedish manufacturer to use the Caetano product, which it described as a good coach body, and it is likely the body will see wider use across Europe once a left-hand drive chassis is available.

Oliver claimed no luggage space has been sacrificed to make way for the electric drive and batteries.

The cells used for the battery packs come from a single external supplier for the moment, though the intention is to have multiple suppliers of batteries as long as the chemistry is nickel manganese cobalt. Scania has invested in its own factory to design and assemble battery packs and the modules they contain, allowing it to produce specifically shaped batteries to fit in convenient places, without compromising capacity.

"Having all cooling properties controlled by Scania is quite important, as it's how to get the maximum life and best performance out of a battery," Oliver added.

Several layers of safety systems guard the batteries. The charger will disconnect if any charging fault is detected. The vehicle itself will disconnect from the power supply while charging if it identifies a charging fault, and the batteries on board are protected by a crash structure.

Each battery pack will disconnect should it identify a current, voltage or temperature fault. Each module within that pack will measure voltages and temperatures to protect the

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Many of the Scania vehicles on the road in the UK today are gas buses, but without funding support for new gas infrastructure, it's unlikely that more will enter service. Reading Buses 701 (YN66 EZM), an Alexander Dennis Enviro400-bodied Scania N280UD, was part of an initial delivery of five gas-powered double-deckers, the first such vehicles delivered to any operator in the world. MARK LYONS

cells, and each cell has its own internal fuse to protect from external abuse.

At first, there will not be an option to replace damaged or faulty modules or cells within the battery, necessitating a change of the entire pack. Oliver explained: "It requires a sophisticated facility to safely take apart a battery," adding that such a facility will be set up soon.

The battery packs sit on cradles which allow removal for various aftersales or repair mechanisms. Scania has patented the runners used with these cradles.

"You don't have to take the body to bits to get access to these components," Oliver said. "A lot of thought has gone into this."

Unlike the hybrid chassis, the battery electric uses a single motor, the new Electric Machine (EM) C1-4. This single motor is coupled to a four-speed gearbox, and has the power output required to drive the coach on its own.

Scania's single motor is compact, with a single rotor. "From a physicality point it's the same as having one washing machine drum instead of two, but with the same power," Oliver mused.

"While the previous motors could spin at 1,700-2,100rpm, the EM C1-4 can boast 3,200-4,300rpm. The motor is powerful enough that drivers have reported being able to feel the gear shifts (albeit not nearly as much as what would be experienced in a diesel vehicle). Scania has judged that the efficiency improvements outweigh this slight impact on the smoothness of the ride.

Return to bus

Lastly, Scania has confirmed a return to the UK bus market, with a battery electric single-decker. While Scania has an existing partnership with Higer for the diesel Fencer product launched in 2021, it would not rule out working with a European bodybuilder.

"We must be strategic with our partnerships. We can be very selective and have historic partnerships already. It's something we will continue to investigate," Oliver said.

"We now have a platform to move forward with a 4x2 battery electric low entry bus, which we hope to bring to market in early 2027.

"We're not the first to market, and the market is aggressive already, but there's still the opportunity to come back. Our sales and support will cover the complete UK network."

Oliver noted that for the remainder of 2025 and much of 2026, the are still vehicles being delivered with current funding support, giving the company time to refine its electric offering for the UK market.

The diesel Fencer is still there as an option, with some updated body elements coming. Oliver explained that the vehicle has not been pushed heavily by Scania GB, as it was aware of the coming technological advancements, and did not wish to push customers to buy into the product before it reached its full potential.

Biogas bypassed

Many of the Scania buses in service in the UK today are housed within the biogas fleets of Nottingham City Transport, Reading Buses and First West of England.

However, it's not something Scania plans to push in the future, as it appears zero emission is preferred to low emission alternative fuels when it comes to supporting funding from government.

Gas buses themselves are not as prohibitively expensive as battery electrics, but the gas infrastructure required to refuel them is likely to require funding support, and there is little appetite for this currently. Moreover, the existing operators of gas buses are at the limit of what their infrastructure can support, though Oliver said the company would be open to providing gas single-deckers if those operators desired replacement vehicles.

"Gas is not on our radar for the UK at the moment," Oliver said, "though that is not a decision by Scania – some markets are still actively taking gas.

"The political sphere around heavy vehicles in the UK is all fixated on zero emission. It is something we would still be able to offer, but the political landscape doesn't lend itself to it at the moment."

Oliver also confirmed that Scania GB has no interest in bringing a double-decker bus chassis to the UK as things stand. The reason is Scania would need to rely more on components from third party suppliers in order to produce such a vehicle, which goes against the company's philosophy of being in control of the entire drive on its vehicles.

However, there is potential for double-decker coaches, should there be demand for them.

Power infrastructure

A key issue with operating electric coaches is their limited range, and this concern will extend to Scania's long distance haulage vehicles as well. However, the company has been working on a potential solution.

Its logic is to ensure vehicles have sufficient range to cover the distance that can reasonably be driven under driver's hours regulations before the driver needs to take a break. Scania claims it can already achieve this, with 34 tonne electric trucks capable of driving upwards of 300km in -27C temperatures.

The ambition is for vehicles to be driven for 4.5 hours, pull into a charging station and fully recharge during a driver's 45 minute break.

To facilitate this, Scania, the wider Traton Group of which it is a part and Daimler have invested €600m in Milence, a company specialising in heavy duty vehicle charging.

The company has been researching the most common fleet routes across Europe, and is building truck charging facilities on them, using 375kw fast chargers. "There's no reason why coaches couldn't use those too," Oliver suggested.

The first such facility in the UK opened this year in Immingham.

Ready to return

Oliver concluded: "Whilst we have been a sleeping party for some time, now we are bringing a wide breadth of products to the UK.

"We do what we do best; we build chassis which are integrated and supported by our network.

"We are proud to be represented strongly at Busworld this year for the UK market." ■

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The MAN Lion's Coach E, the first electric touring coach from a European manufacturer.

ELECTRIC COACH DAWN

Automotive battery development has reached a stage where zero-emission drivelines will work in coaches and other interurban vehicles, as **ALAN MILLAR** found at Europe's biggest bus and coach show in October

If there was a trend to detect at this year's Busworld Europe exhibition in Brussels on October 4 to 9 — global manufacturers' showcase for the vehicles they hope to bring to market in 2026 and 2027 — it is that battery electric coaches are turning from a niche product or pipedream into an everyday reality.

Mainstream manufacturers are taking advantage of huge leaps in the capacity and durability of batteries either to introduce electric coaches into their model mix with an acceptable balance of luggage space and range or are confident that they will have them within the next four years.

Their confidence is also apparent in the duration of warranties they now attach to their batteries, 14 years in the case of MAN, 15 with Yutong, BYD and Higer. That implies that batteries will last for most of the working life of a bus or coach, possibly all of it as Yutong says its batteries are experiencing no more than 30% degradation after 15 years.

If they maintain that confidence at the next Busworld Europe from October 16 to 21 in 2027, not only will diesel coaches' days look numbered but the dabbling with hydrogen that was evident in Brussels in 2023 could be abandoned, a temporary diversion into technology many now regard as impractical.

This was the biggest ever Busworld Europe, occupying 71% of the floor space of the Brussels Expo complex — 82,000sqm and eight of its 12 halls. The number of exhibitors was up from 526 from 38 countries two years ago to 559 from 40 countries, the number of bus and coach manufacturers up from 75 to 81, though the number of vehicles in the halls was down from 222 to 209 and the number demonstrated outside (29) was unchanged.

Although there was much of interest for British visitors, major UK manufacturers Alexander Dennis and Wrightbus once again were absent, even though Wrightbus is active in the German market.

The number of visitors was up by another 13% from 40,120 to 45,427, but as in 2023 they came from fewer countries — 101 against 111 last time and 143 in pre-pandemic 2019.

Scania, MAN and Volvo

European type approval groups passenger vehicles into three classes. Buses designed to carry large numbers of standing passengers are Class I, mainly seated vehicles with some standing space are Class II and those exclusively for seated passengers are Class III. Class I are city

Right-hand-drive Scania K HF EV with Caetano e.Levante body.

The 15m Castrosua Hero-bodied Volvo BZR on the coachbuilder's stand.

buses, which in UK applications may be used more widely on multi-stop interurban services and often are double-deck. The closest UK equivalents of Class II are the coaches that Stagecoach operates on limited stop routes in central Scotland. Class III are coaches.

Manufacturers have already nailed the technology to electrify Class I. What they brought to Brussels this time were their new Class II and/or Class III offerings. Most claim a range on a single charge of between 500 and 700km, which many of us better understand this side of the English Channel as between 310 and 430miles.

If these figures are achieved in real-life working conditions — saloon heaters, air conditioning, windscreen wipers, running lights, saloon lights and challenging topography all strain batteries — electric coaches are becoming practical for many intercity express services, and could comfortably become so with the next upward nudges in battery range expected before 2030. London-Edinburgh-Glasgow is 450miles, London-Aberdeen 540miles. The latest electric coaches on offer now could link London with the north of England on a single charge.

Leading the European manufacturers' development of Class III coaches are Scania and MAN, two of the brands within Volkswagen's Traton bus and truck group, both of which launched products now available for operators to buy.

Scania's offering, one of a handful of right-hand-drive exhibits, is the K-series HF EV (high-floor electric vehicle) shown at Brussels in 14.3m three-axle format with Caetano e.Levante body, a development of the 55-seat Levante IIIA supplied on Scania K410EB6 diesel for National Express work. The Swedish-based manufacturer is claiming a range between charges of 600km (370miles) with luggage capacity comparable with diesels.

Although finished in white, its livery was Scania's rather than National Express's, but if NatEx is to survive increasing UK competition from Flixbus and the traumas that have beset its parent Mobico group, this is the vehicle most likely to deliver an all-electric network.

The HF EV also is available in two-axle form. Chassis are expected to be in production by the early part of 2026 "at the latest" according to Scania.

MAN is building on the success of its Lion's City E electric city bus — nearly 3,000 delivered since 2019 — by introducing the Lion's Coach E. Like the established diesel Lion's Coach, it is available in two- and three-axle forms with up to 63 seats and at between 11 and 13cum, no loss of luggage capacity. It is claiming a range between charges of up to 650km (400miles) "in optimum conditions".

The Lion's Coach is only produced in left-hand-drive, with the Turkish-built Neoplan Tourliner meeting demand in the UK and Ireland for a right-hand-drive MAN. It can only be a matter of time before the guts of the Lion's Coach E power an electric Neoplan.

Announced ten days before the show opened was Volvo's contender in this sector, the BZR which will be available in lengths of between 9.5m and 15m, with up to 720kWh battery capacity and a claimed range between charges of 700km (430miles). Volvo offers a choice of plug-in charging or opportunity charging by pantograph.

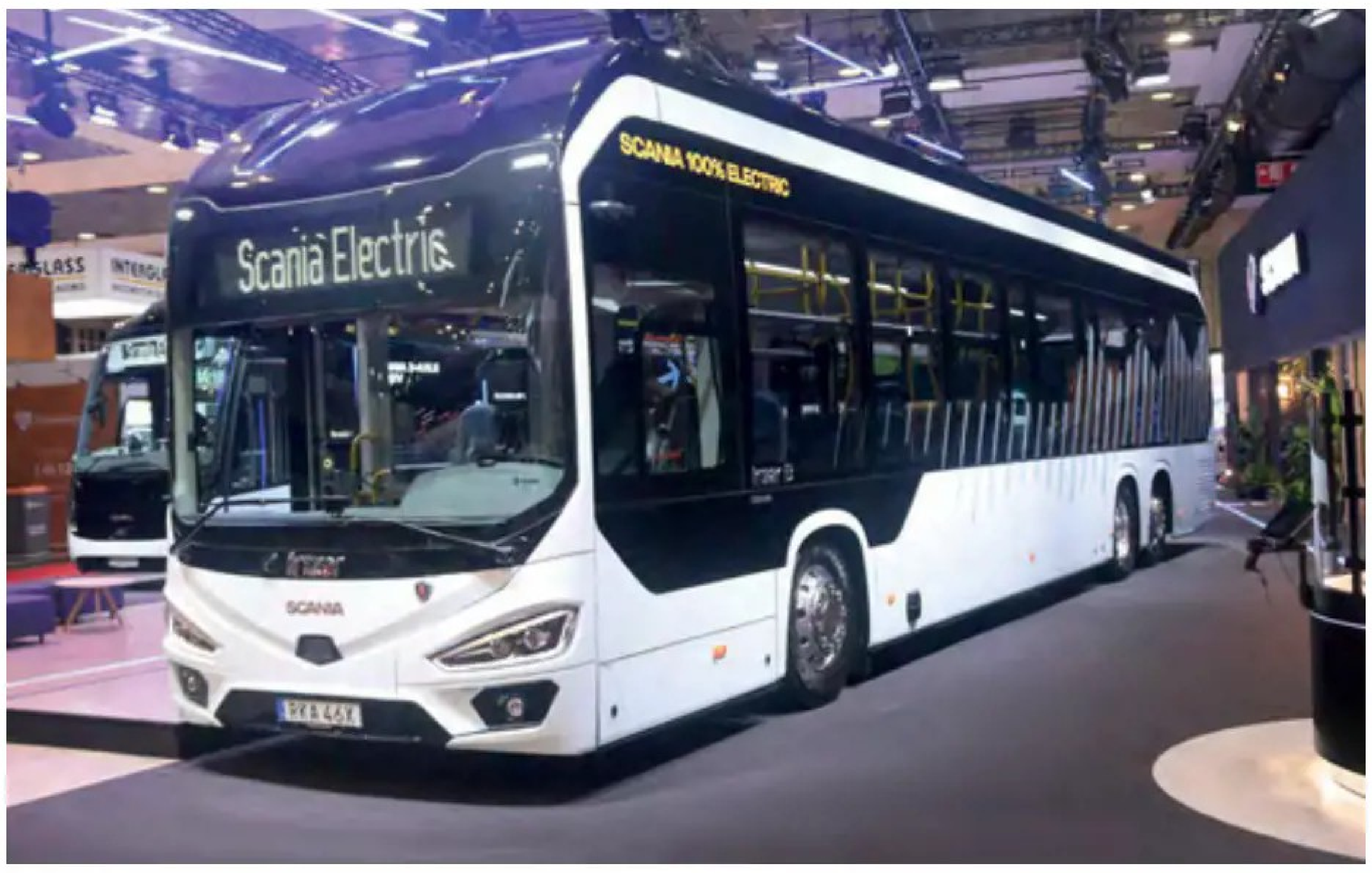
In the past the BZR would have been a major product launch at the show, but Volvo last bought stand space at Busworld in 2019, the first held in Brussels after the exhibition relocated from Kortrijk, and it has avoided other shows elsewhere, including the UK.

There were Volvo exhibits this time but scattered around and outside the halls on the stands of bodybuilder partners like MCV which now builds the 7900 city bus for continental Europe at its facility in Egypt. Among them was the only BZR on show, a 15m example — 14.995m to be precise — on Spanish coachbuilder Castrosua's stand with a 3.7m high 62-seat dual-door Hero body, displayed alongside bus bodies on Scania and BYD chassis, a vehicle promoted as an intercity coach for the sorts of services that operate extensively across Spain.

The BZR will be made available to a range of bodybuilders. Besides Castrosua, Finland-based Carrus Delta, which already builds the Volvo-designed 9700DD double-deck coach sold in the UK and Ireland, has bodied a BZR for Nordic and Benelux markets.

Mercedes eIntouro

Mercedes-Benz promises to have an electric touring coach, most likely an eTourismo, by 2030. It promised that two years ago and has fulfilled another promise made then of having an electric Class II coach ready for 2025. That is the eIntouro, a zero-emission version of the diesel-powered Intouro, a left-hand-drive model with no UK equivalent, but



Left-hand-drive Scania K LE EV with a three-door Irizar i3 body.

Mercedes-Benz eIntouro, a Class II interurban electric bus.

The BYD B12.b HF. Part of the display board highlighting its space for 121 suitcases is visible through the windscreen.

The Alfa Bus L13 intercity bus.

which has clocked up sales of 20,000 units. It has taken its first orders for the electric model, with deliveries scheduled to start in the second half of 2026.

Like the diesel, the eIntouro is offered in two- and three-axle versions with up to 50 or 63 seats. The claim is that it will be as safe, reliable and versatile as the diesel, with a range of up to 500km (310miles) on a single charge. Combatting operators' range anxiety was a high priority in its development. Pre-launch testing took it into temperatures of -30°C within the Arctic Circle and one was test driven successfully for 380km (240miles) from Switzerland to Germany and back in April without requiring a charge.

The launch of the eIntouro builds on the successful introduction of the eCitaro electric urban bus in 2018. Although still a rare sight in the UK, Mercedes has sold over 3,000 and is continuing to refine it, most recently by adopting the latest battery technology and a new drive axle.

"Our priority is not being the first but offering practical and affordable products," explains Daimler Buses chief executive officer Till Oberwörder. While he is confident that the Class III electric coach will be ready by 2030, he is not convinced that the supporting infrastructure will be there to persuade operators to buy them before then.

Two years ago, he said the European Union's target of reducing CO2 emissions from coaches to 45% of where they were in 2021 is unlikely to be achieved and the best he expected was a 20% reduction. He still thinks that today, unless governments and local authorities invest in coach-specific charging infrastructure across the continent at locations like major tourist attractions, holiday parks and coach parks. As an example of what needs to be done on a much larger scale, Daimler is installing four public fast-charging facilities in Cologne in 2026 and hopes to provide more elsewhere.

Irizar backs EV over H2

In what appears to be a significant stepping stone towards producing an electric Class III coach, Irizar unveiled its Class II offering, the i3 Normal Floor electric. In this case 'normal' is what we would regard as 'high', as this is a 3.55m high version of the low-entry i3 bus sold in small numbers in the UK on Scania K-series bus chassis and in Spain as an integral. There are multiple steps in the entrance and wide centre exit.

The prototype on the Irizar stand was a 12.2m two-axle vehicle with 49 seats and 4.5cum of luggage lockers; it could be reconfigured with 53 seats, and longer, three-axle versions would offer over 7cum of luggage space. Besides luggage as we know it, Spanish service buses like these need the lockers to accommodate folded pushchairs that can be wheeled aboard a low-entry bus.

Its 528kWh of battery power delivers a range of over 450km (280miles) on a single charge, with the option of plug-in or drop-down pantograph charging.

Before production begins in the third quarter of next year, Irizar expects to make some adjustments to the design, including its luggage compartments, in light of operator feedback once they see the prototype, but not to the basic principle of battery-electric drive. It had already embraced it as the only power option on its integral buses, but two years ago came to Brussels with a prototype hydrogen fuel-cell i6S Efficient coach with a range of 1,000km (620miles) on full tanks, believing then that this was the only practical means of delivering zero-emission operation to long-distance coaches.

Not any longer. It says the market is not ready for hydrogen. The biggest obstacle is availability of the fuel, which at best is patchy, and operators are more concerned about obtaining the fuel than how it is made. Only so-called green hydrogen, produced from renewable sources like wind or tidal generation, is zero-emission in the widest sense, but it also is more expensive to produce than blue hydrogen made from natural gas. Irizar says that assuming they could get it, operators would not care whether their hydrogen is green, blue or any of the other hues on the manufacturing shade card.

MCV, with a prototype Class II fuel-cell bus on its stand, talked more enthusiastically about the prospects for hydrogen-powered coaches, saying that Egypt is well placed to manufacture the fuel, using water from the Mediterranean and Red Sea and from its abundant sunshine, but it is something of an outlier.

There also was a low-entry i3 body on the Scania stand, on a left-hand-drive three-axle K-series LE EV electric chassis, a Class II vehicle promoted as a city suburban bus

The Irizar i3 Normal Floor.

King Long MC13E Premium coach.

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with a range between charges of up to 550kmn (340miles).

Not yet ready but expected in production during 2026 is a Class II vehicle from Solaris, the Polish manufacturer owned by Spanish rail vehicle builder CAF. Foreshadowed at Busworld two years ago and now close to completion, this will be in the mould of the Irizar i3 Normal Floor and Mercedes-Benz eIntouro. Artists' impressions show that its high-floor body will share the look of the low-floor Urbino bus. Solaris says it aims to be the best-in-class electric intercity bus, though that is probably every manufacturer's ambition.

Chinese power ahead

Alongside the European manufacturers' developments, and probably helping drive them, was further evidence of the Chinese bus builders' leadership in electric vehicle technology, with several Class II and III models on show.

BYD's offering includes its new Class II B12.b HF, a 12m intercity coach with body styling more reminiscent of a bus. Like its low-floor city buses, this uses BYD's blade battery technology introduced at Busworld two years ago, slender units that fit within the chassis frame to occupy less space and create a lower and safer centre of gravity. It makes room for 5.7cum of luggage space which, according to BYD's stand display, is sufficient for 121 suitcases, though perhaps not the largest ones that will fit into the MAN Lion's Coach E.

BYD claims that range on a full charge is 650km (400miles) and that the B12.b HF — not to be confused with the erstwhile Volvo B12B diesel — has potential as an express bus, tourist shuttle or schoolbus.

Alfa Bus, which has had a European sales operation since 2017 and has gained a toehold for its L12 electric city bus in six Spanish, three Italian and two Bulgarian fleets, appeared at Busworld for the first time. It included its new Class II 13.3m two-axle L13 electric intercity bus, a 3.4m high 63-seater, on its stand. This has a claimed range of 500km (310miles) on a single charge.

100% Electric
VISIONING THE DREAM
HIGER BUS

Higer V Series electric. A diesel version is coming to the UK.

Occupying a pivotal point adjoining Halls 5, 8 and 9, the King Long Group showcased the products of its three brands — King Long, Golden Dragon and Higer. They all launched Class III electric coaches, King Long the stylish MC13E Premium and Golden Dragon GC15 with a claimed range of 600km (370miles) on a single charge, and the Higer V Series with a more modest 500km (310miles). Diesel versions of the V Series will be available in the UK from 2026.

Yutong, the Chinese manufacturer making the most impact in the UK, showed its new generation IC12e Class II, a 59-seater with advertised range of 575km (355miles), but the vital statistic accompanying an updated T14E Class III coach revealed how rapidly battery technology is advancing and how important is the balance between range and luggage space.

Two years ago, a T15E — 1m longer — promised a then impressive range of 550km (340miles) on a single charge with a relatively modest 8.5cum luggage area, sufficient we said then to propel it from Cardiff to Newcastle with power to spare. This fractionally shorter 61-seater also limits luggage space to 8.5cum, but Yutong says a full charge will take it 54% farther — 850km (525miles). That coach from Cardiff could be within touching distance of Aberdeen before running flat.

YUTONG
T14E
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850
704

The Yutong T14E with projected range of 525miles.

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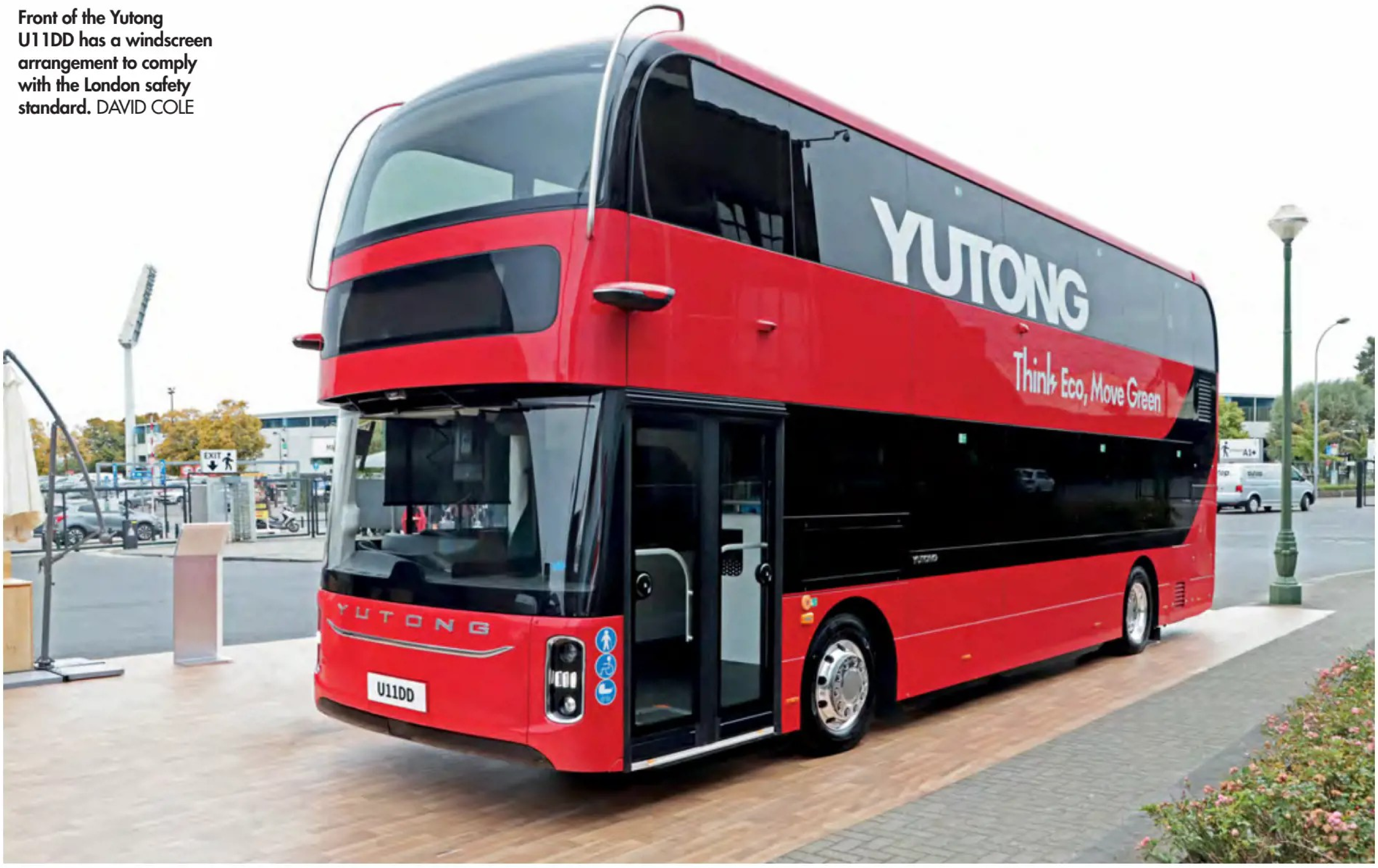
YUTONG READIES DOUBLE-DECKER FOR LONDON



Front of the Yutong U11DD has a windscreen arrangement to comply with the London safety standard. DAVID COLE

Since launching it at Busworld in 2023, Yutong has supplied nearly 150 U11DD double-deckers to UK operators, mainly First Bus subsidiaries across southern England.

A development vehicle displayed outside the main entrance to this year's show revealed how close it has got to meeting Transport for London's (TfL) exacting specifications while also overcoming an awkward feature of the original model.

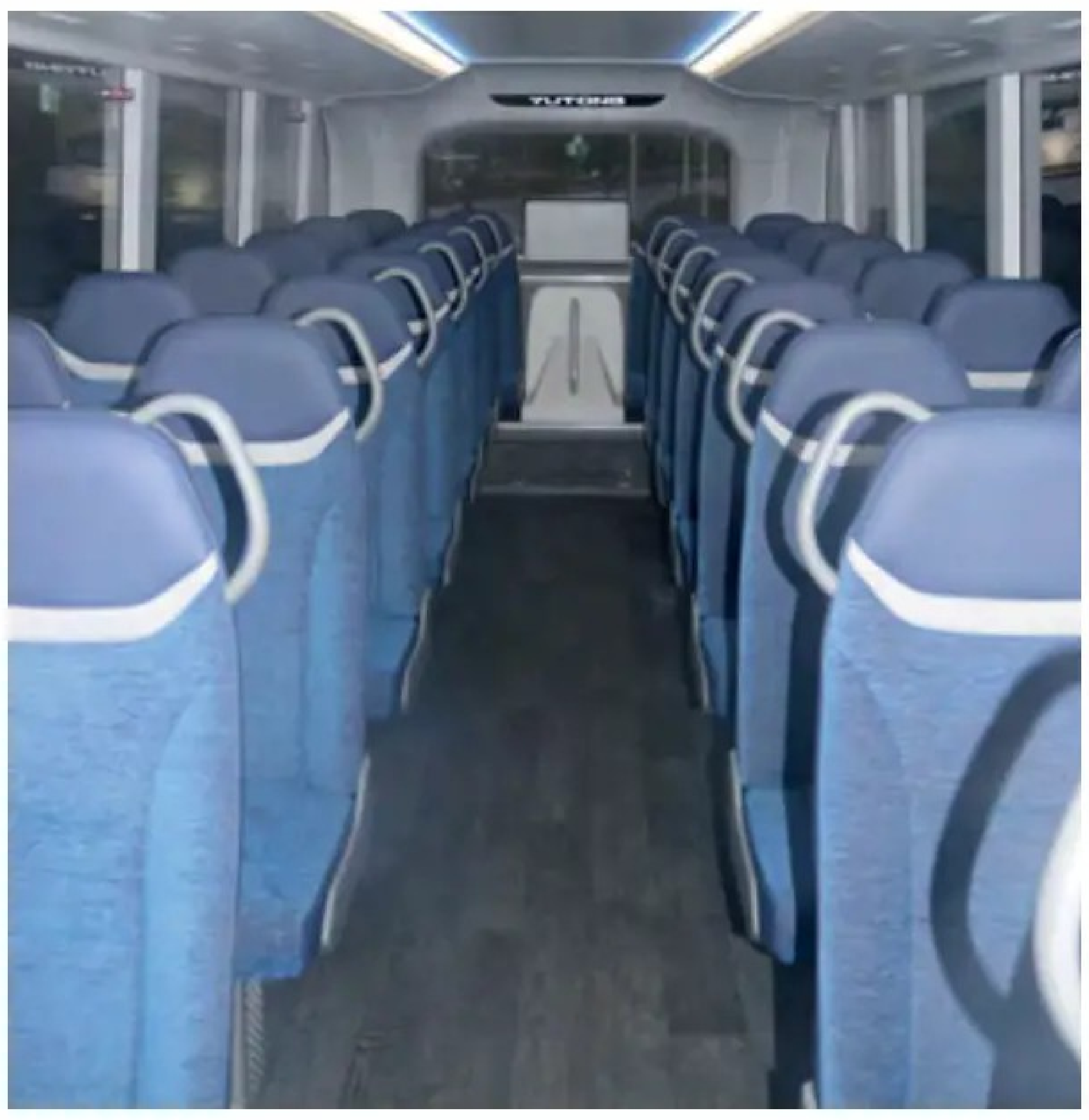
That weakness in an otherwise sound design was a step in the upper saloon gangway, about three rows from the back seats, something passengers would not expect to encounter as it is not found on other double-deckers, a potential trip hazard to cause injuries and prompt compensation claims. It was there because the lower saloon ceiling is higher at that point.

Happily, Yutong has got rid of it by repackaging the batteries and redesigning the lower saloon. The back row of seats downstairs is lower, and the second back row over the rear wheels faces backwards instead of forwards, with only one step up to the back seats instead of two. The staircase has also been redesigned with right-angled turns.

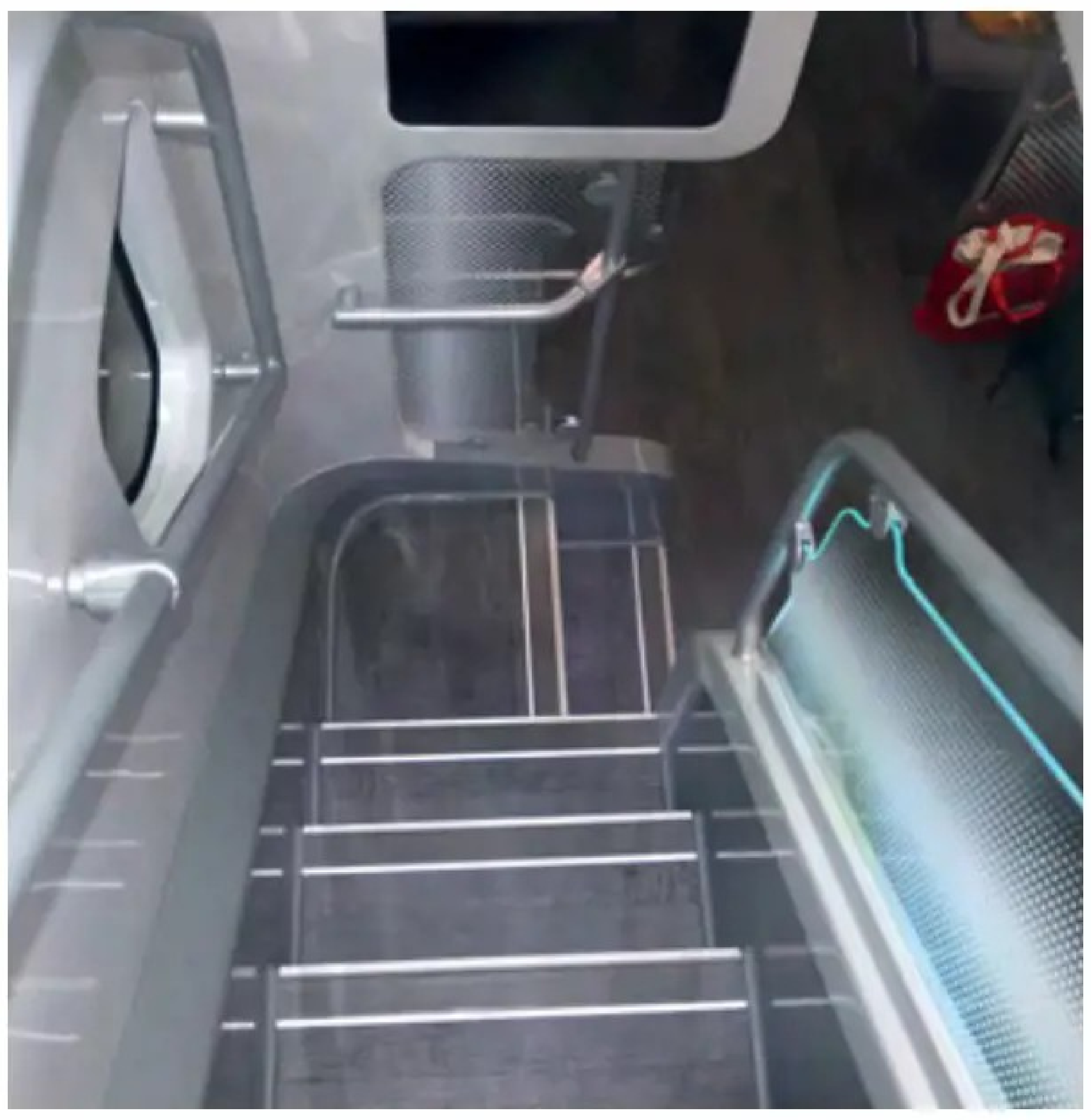
Outside, the most obvious change — apart from Yutong's application of more prominent branding on the front of all its products — is that the vertical driver's windscreen of the original model, flush with the front of the bus, is now angled to comply with TfL's Bus Safety Standard. The effect is similar to that of BYD's BD11, with a shallow canopy above the top of the

Rear view of the U11DD.

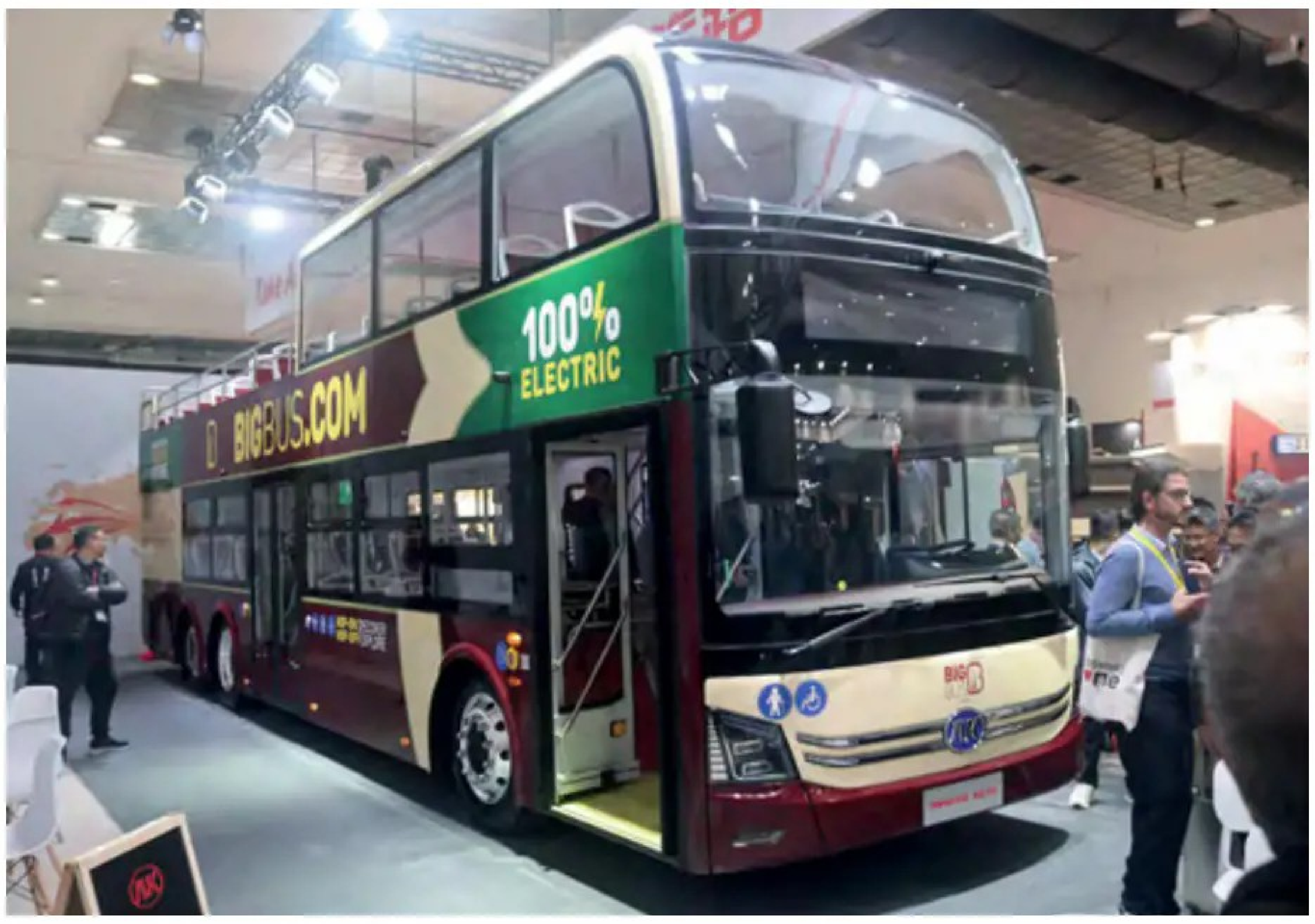
YUTONG
Think Eco, Move Green



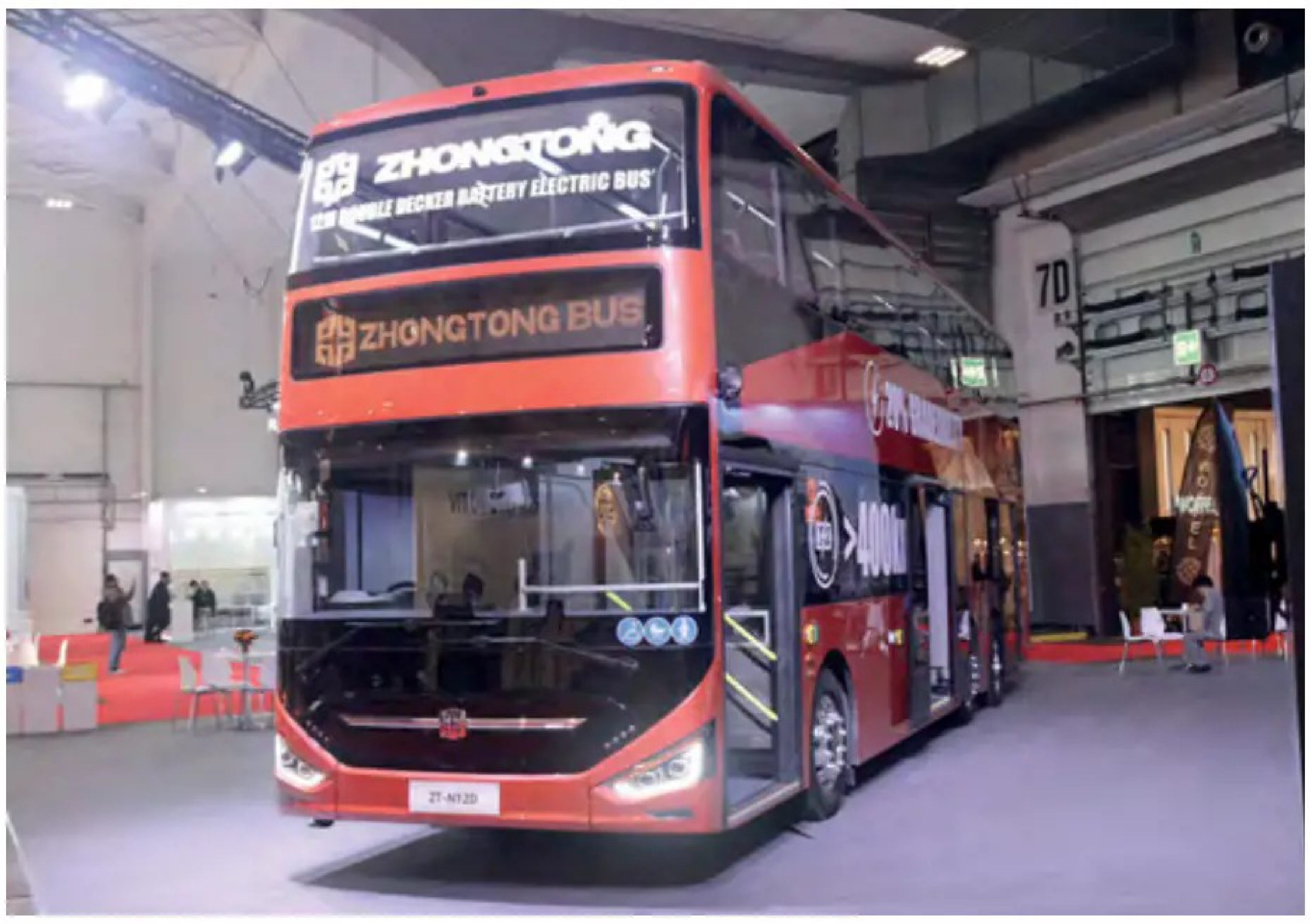
Top deck of the U11DD is now step-free.



Right-angled turn in the redesigned U11DD staircase.



Ankai E12S for Big Bus Paris.



Three-door Zhongtong N12D built to Singapore specification.

windscreen. It might look odd, but it should reduce the severity of any injuries suffered by a pedestrian being struck by a moving bus.

However, although fitted with a London windscreen and lower front dash and painted allover red, this single-door vehicle was not a London bus. It was to be shipped back to China for further testing and another development vehicle, with two-door body, is being built for London. Yutong expects to have both new versions ready for production from the second half of 2026.

Sightseeing electric

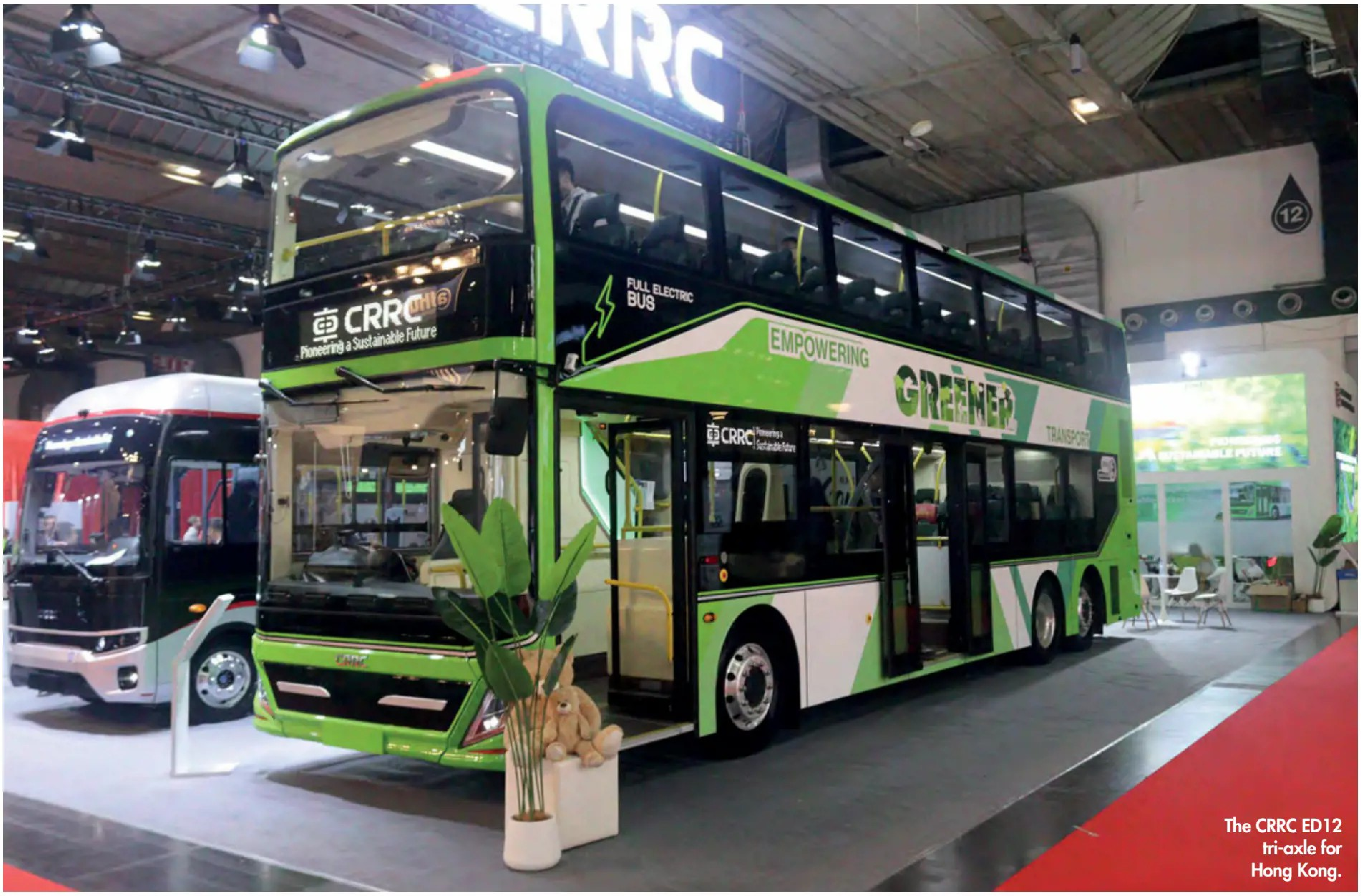
Chinese manufacturers showed three other electric double-deckers, all tri-axle and one of them built for Europe. That was the Ankai E12S, a tri-axle open-top sightseeing bus configured in left-hand-drive for the Big Bus operation in Paris. The 12m vehicle has 70 seats, 50 upstairs.

This is the manufacturer's fourth generation model, the diesel buses new to Big Bus London in 2012 and now being converted to electric drive were the second generation. A right-hand-drive E12S is being developed for London.

Demonstrating that UK manufacturers' dominance of the Hong Kong double-deck market can no longer be taken for granted was the ED12, an impressively finished two-door 86-seater from CRRC, the China Railway Construction Corporation. Originally the railway arm of the People's Liberation Army, CRRC is best known for its construction of China's high-speed railways and has diversified into manufacturing electric buses and coaches. It describes itself as an electric vehicle company, never having built any internal combustion-engined buses, and provides some of the components and technology that Caetano uses in its buses.

The double-decker, with capacity for an additional 40 standing passengers, is 11.98m long, 2.55m wide and 4,390mm high, which is almost 14ft 5in high in Imperial measurements. It is constructed using railway technology and componentry and has a lightweight structure that employs aluminium sourced from Sweden. Its range on a single charge is stated to be 560km (350miles).

Like the CRRC vehicle, the Zhongtong N12D on that Chinese manufacturer's stand also was in right-hand-drive. The three-door 12m vehicle, with claimed range in excess of 400km (250miles), was built to the pattern specified in Singapore where a vehicle has been on trial with Tower Transit.



The CRRC ED12 tri-axle for Hong Kong.

THIRD GENERATION FUTURA

Electric long-distance coaches may be just around the corner, but development of diesel models continues, with more models launched this year.

Cummins, despite diversifying beyond diesel into electric drivelines and its launch of a new independent front suspension at Busworld, unveiled its Euro VI 10litre X10 engine for interurban buses and coaches with power outputs of 355 to 454hp. Daimler says it will continue to produce Mercedes-Benz and Setra coaches with diesel engines, which will be upgraded to meet the Euro VII emission standards due to affect all new vehicles from May 2029. Scania's latest 13litre engine is prepared for Euro VII, head of product management Carl-Johan Lööf describing it as the company's "best combustion powertrain ever".

VDL came to Busworld with its long anticipated third generation Futura, the FHD3, hints of which were on its stand two years ago. Although VDL's acquisition of Van Hool last year gave it a factory in North Macedonia, the Futura will continue to be built in the Netherlands and a right-hand-drive FHD3 is expected by 2027.

It will be diesel-powered initially — the FHD2 uses the Dutch-built 10.8litre MX-11 and 12.9litre MX-13 engines by Paccar-owned DAF — although electric and other options are being considered for the future. VDL was one of the first European urban bus builders to produce electric vehicles in volume.

VDL is claiming a fuel consumption improvement of 15% thanks to weight reduction, better aerodynamics and what it describes as advanced vehicle technology. The cab area and climate control systems have been redesigned, and the new coach has been made easier and cheaper to repair.

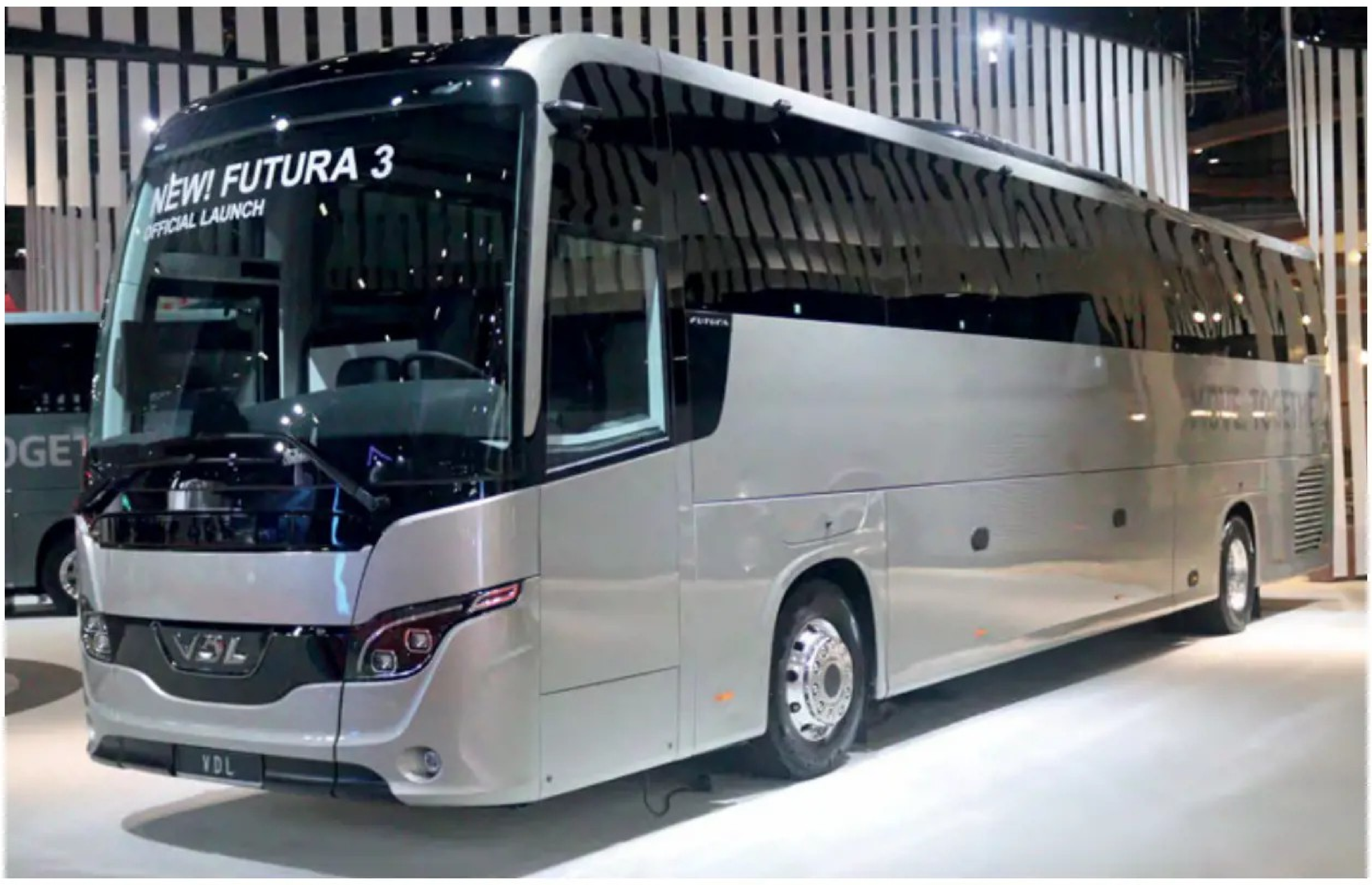
The result is a body shape that, while still recognisable as a Futura, is less distinctive than its predecessors. Pursuit of fuel-saving aerodynamics meant that the original Futura, produced by Bova from 1982, stood apart from everything else thanks to its large, raked windscreen, bulbous lower dash and gently bowed sides. The FHD2, introduced in 2010 and sold in the UK from 2012, retained that overall look in a muted form, losing the bulbous dash and gaining curved sides.

The front of the new model is more of a homogenised feature, the windscreen not dissimilar to the Van Hool T range, though the sculpted back end has a racier air to it. This is a coach perhaps best viewed, or at least recognised, from behind.

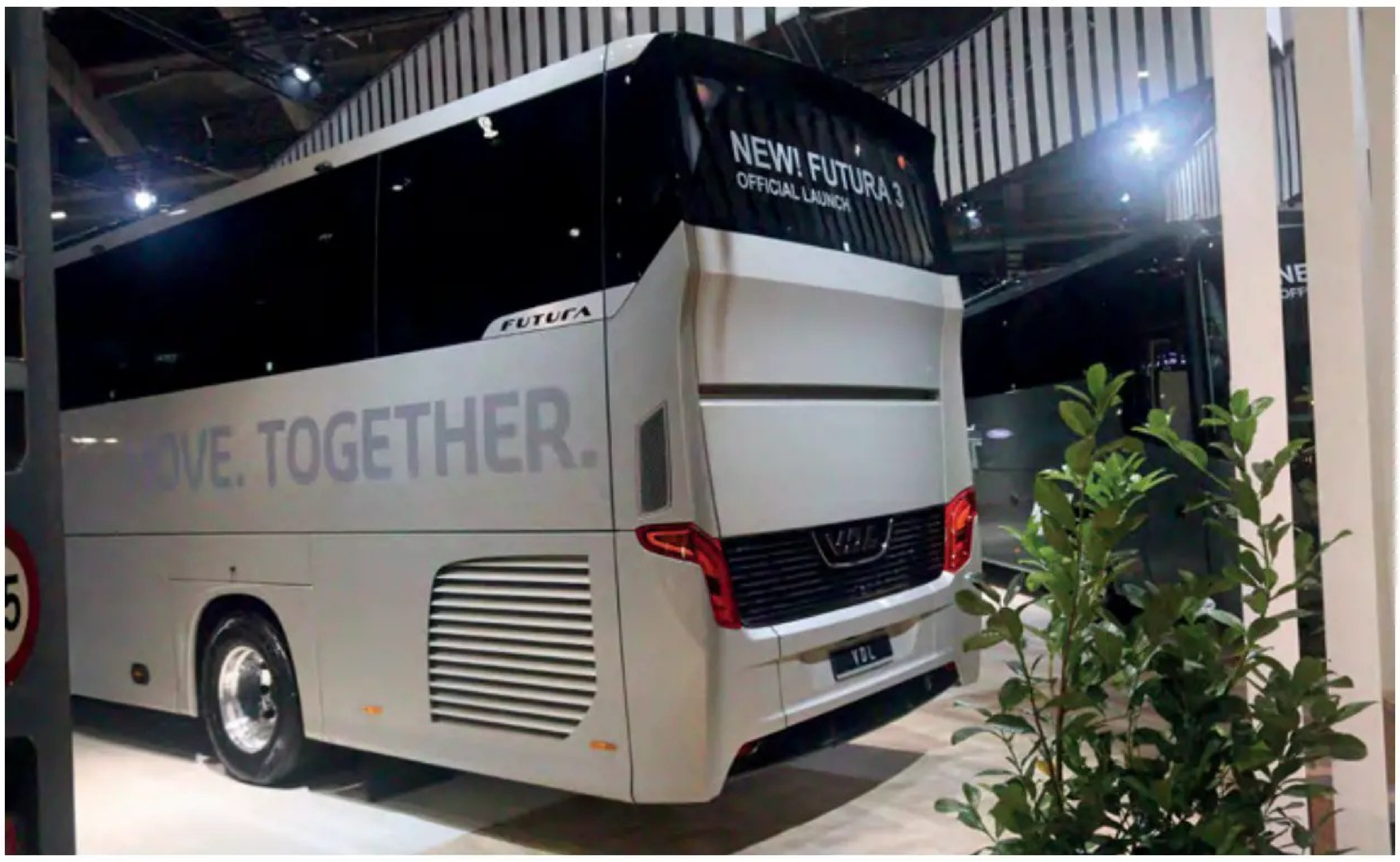
Offerings from Brazil and Egypt

A familiar name returning to Europe is Marcopolo. The Brazilian manufacturer, which has a shareholding in Alexander Dennis's Canadian owner NFI Group, used to have a factory in Portugal and was active in the UK. It displayed products at previous Busworld exhibitions, but these latterly were for Latin America.

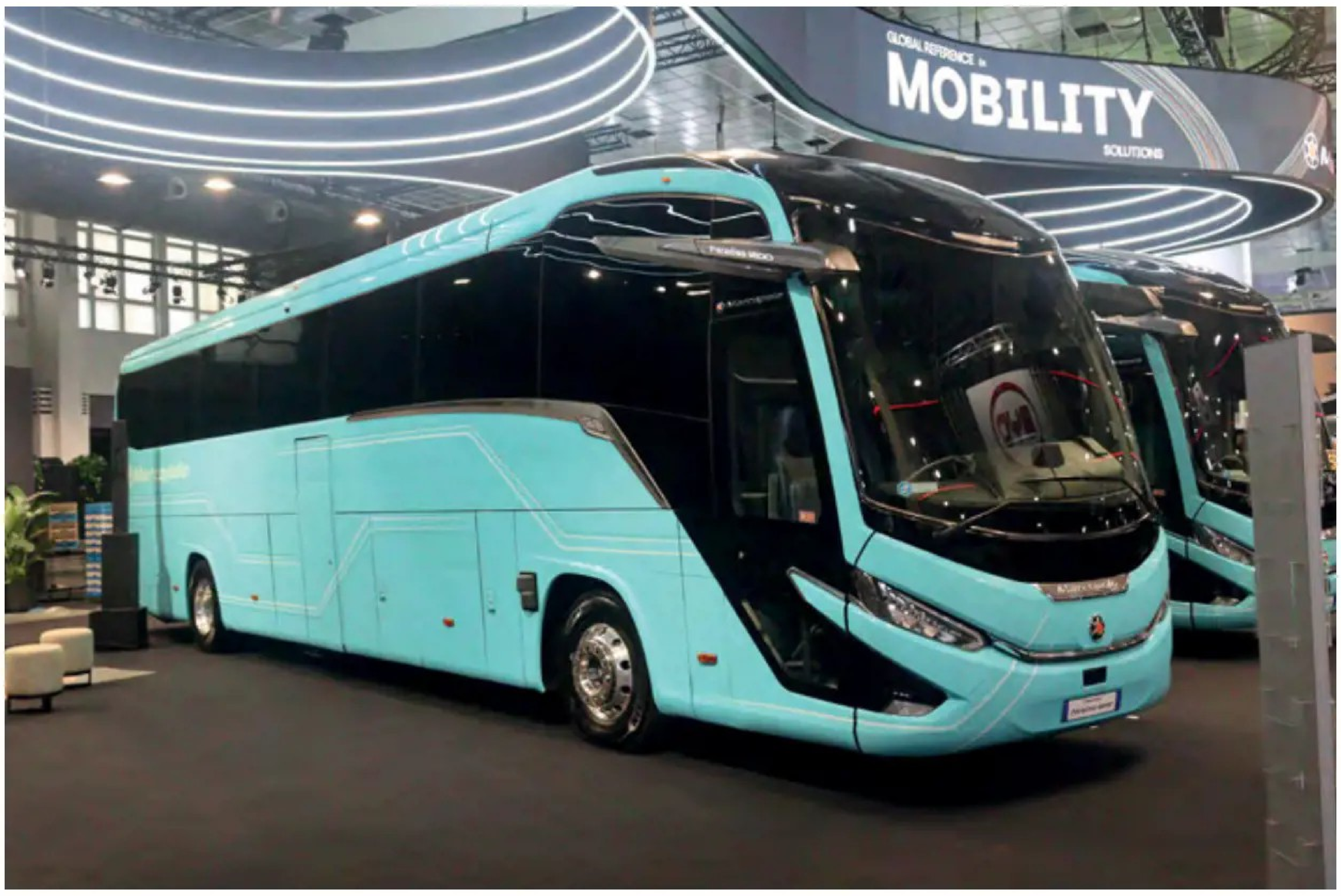
It came to Brussels this year with two examples of its G8 — Generation 8 —



The VDL Futura FHD3, due in right-hand-drive by 2027.



Rear of the Futura FHD3.



Marcopolo G8 Paradiso 1200 body on Volvo B13R chassis.

Geyushi Cairo-bodied Volvo B8R.

Paradiso body introduced in 2021, of which it has sold more than 5,000 so far, over 1,500 of them outside Brazil — a Paradiso G8 1200 on a two-axle Volvo B13R chassis and a Paradiso G8 1350 on a tri-axle Scania K.

The Volvo/Paradiso combination is coming to Europe by the end of next year, initially in France and Italy, on the two- and three-axle B13R.

Volvo also is cooperating with Egyptian coachbuilder Geyushi, which came to Busworld in 2023 with its Luxor body on an MAN chassis primarily for the Egyptian market. Indeed, at that show, the chassis partner made clear that it would not take kindly to it being sold in Europe in competition with established products.

The partnership with Volvo may not have the same limitations. The 3.7m high Cairo body was shown on a Euro V-engined B11R that meets Egyptian and wider Middle East emission standards and a Euro VI-engined B8R suitable for western Europe, including the UK. Geyushi has built DAF-based midicoaches for the UK and Ireland, marketed as part of the Noone Turas range.

Volvo needs all the bodybuilding help it can get. It has been struggling in the UK since Alexander Dennis paused Plaxton coach production and manufacturing of its complete 9700 and 9900 models was halted by the closure of the Wroclaw plant in Poland. Plans for Sunsundegui to manufacture those models in Spain under contract unravelled and the subsequent collapse of that Spanish business also removed its own products — built only on Volvo for the UK and Ireland — from a narrowing list of options. Volvo now intends to build the 9700 for European customers at a factory in Mexico.

Unvi's XL body is coming to the UK and Ireland next year on the B13R, possibly to other markets, though that Spanish bodybuilder also is in discussions with other chassis partners, so the XL is unlikely to be an exclusive Volvo product across all of Europe.

At the other end of the size scale, Anodolu Isuzu — the Turkish joint venture with Isuzu of Japan that recently acquired Samauto in Uzbekistan — launched a longer version of its Grand Toro midicoach. At 9.3m (30ft 6in) with 41 seats, the Grand Toro XL is 800mm longer, with four more seats and luggage space up from 4.6cum to 4.8cum. It remains powered by a front-mounted Cummins ISBe four-cylinder engine with either Allison automatic or ZF manual transmission.

ANADOLU
More to Offer
Biggest Member of the Grand Family
ISUZU

With 41 seats, Isuzu Grand Toro XL has the capacity of a typical 1960s Ford or Bedford.

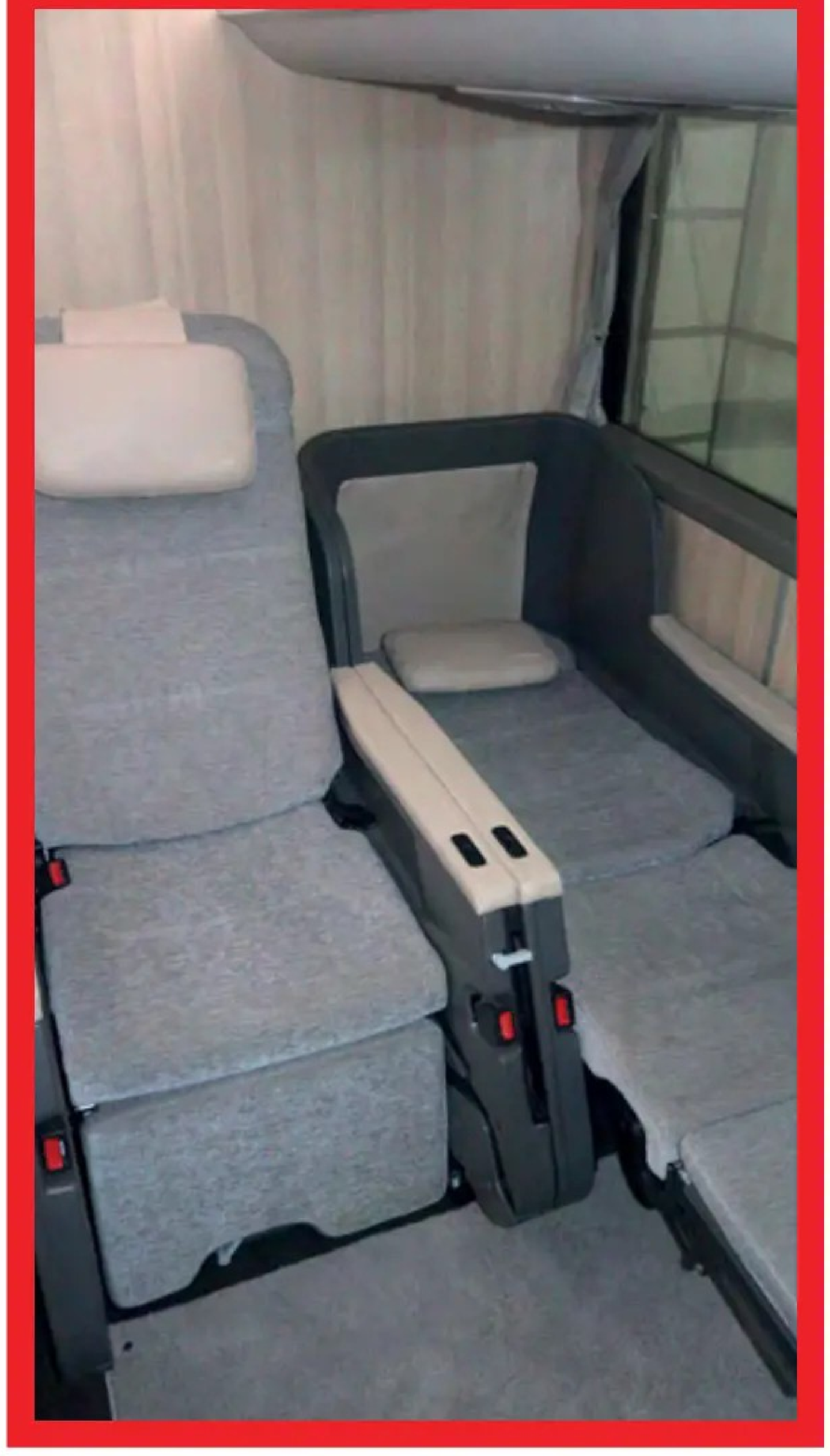
Travel asleep across Europe

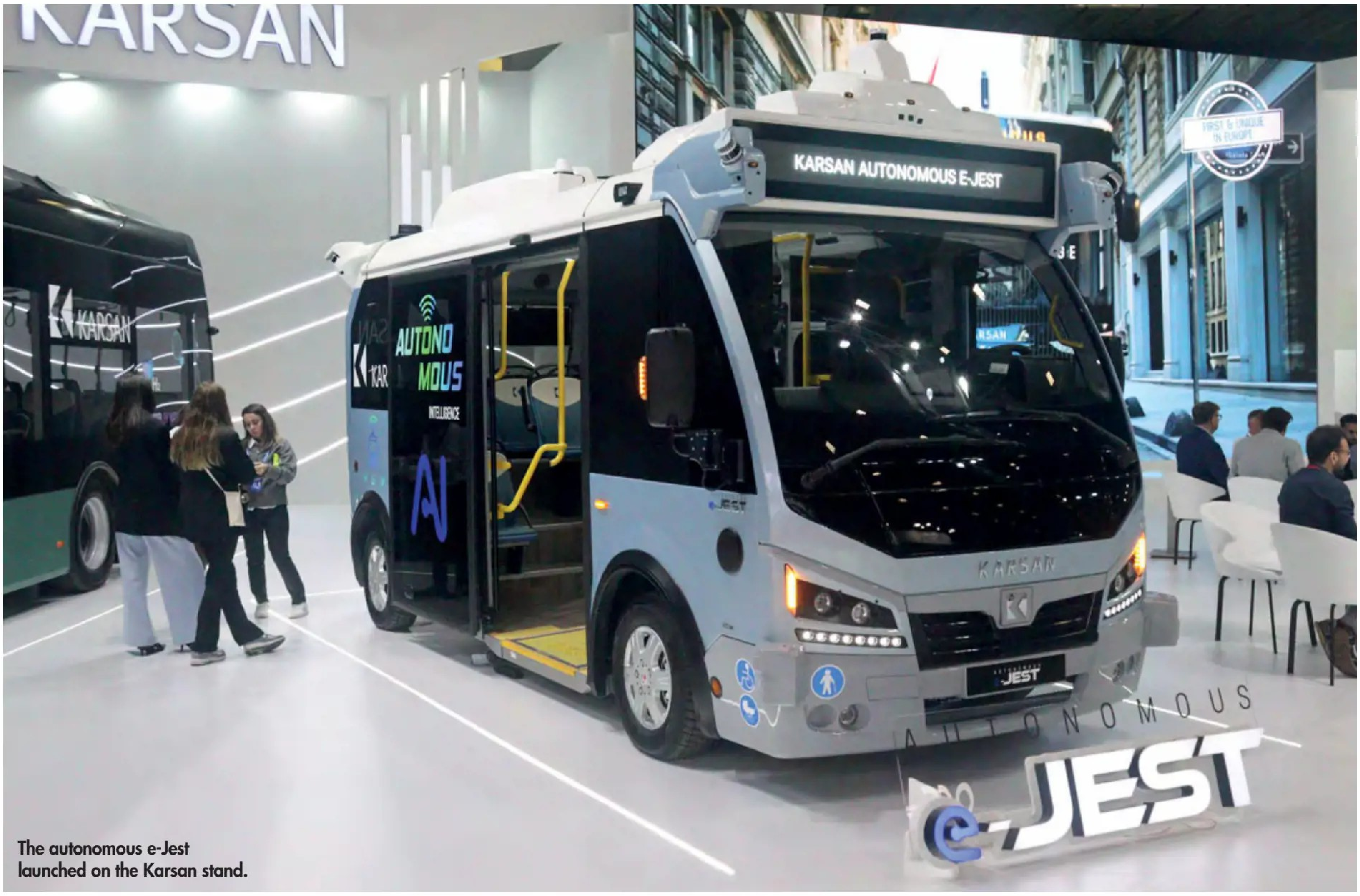
TAKE THIS AYATS LYING DOWN

An Ayats Horizon double-decker on the Spanish coachbuilder's stand previewed a new business class overnight sleeper coach service being introduced in December.

The coach was destined for Luxembourg operator Emile Weber which will operate it on behalf of Twiliner, a new start Swiss business that intends to link 25 major European cities by 2028 and starts with routes connecting Zurich with Amsterdam and Barcelona, with single fares of around £190. That compares with advance booked Flixbus fares of £40 to £75 on those routes.

The difference is that Flixbus carries over 50 seated passengers, while Twiliner has just 21 aircraft-style seats in 2+1 formation in the Horizon, all of which offer generous daytime legroom and convert into lie-flat beds; there are 18 in the top deck and three downstairs. The Van Hool Astromega double-deck sleeper coaches that Stagecoach operated on Anglo-Scottish MegabusGold services between 2013 and 2017 had 87 seats that converted into 48 beds.





The autonomous e-Jest launched on the Karsan stand.

TURKISH BUILDERS PUSH AUTONOMY

While Alexander Dennis is leading the trial of autonomous, potentially driverless, technology in the UK with a pair of Enviro100AEVs in Cambridge, the momentum in Europe — certainly at Busworld — has come from Turkish manufacturers Karsan and Otokar, both of them demonstrating small electric vehicles in action outside the exhibition halls, where they were joined by a rather funky-looking 5m autonomous minibus from Poland, the Blees BB-1.

Karsan demonstrated an 8.3m door-forward dual-door e-Atak outside, and inside the show unveiled the autonomous version of its BMW-powered 5.8m wheel-forward single-door e-Jest, a vehicle increasingly popular in conventionally driven form for historic and pedestrianised European city centres. The e-Atak is 2.4m wide, while an e-Jest with wing mirrors is 2.2m.

Karsan has implemented or is in the process of implementing 16 autonomous bus projects in 12 countries, mainly in Europe, and is evangelical in advocating driverless operation. “We believe we can make autonomous buses widespread in public transport,” says chief executive officer Okan Bas, who sees them overcoming widespread shortages of drivers and inefficiencies in the provision of services, and believes they will enable cities to expand public transport more cost effectively than they would with staffed vehicles.

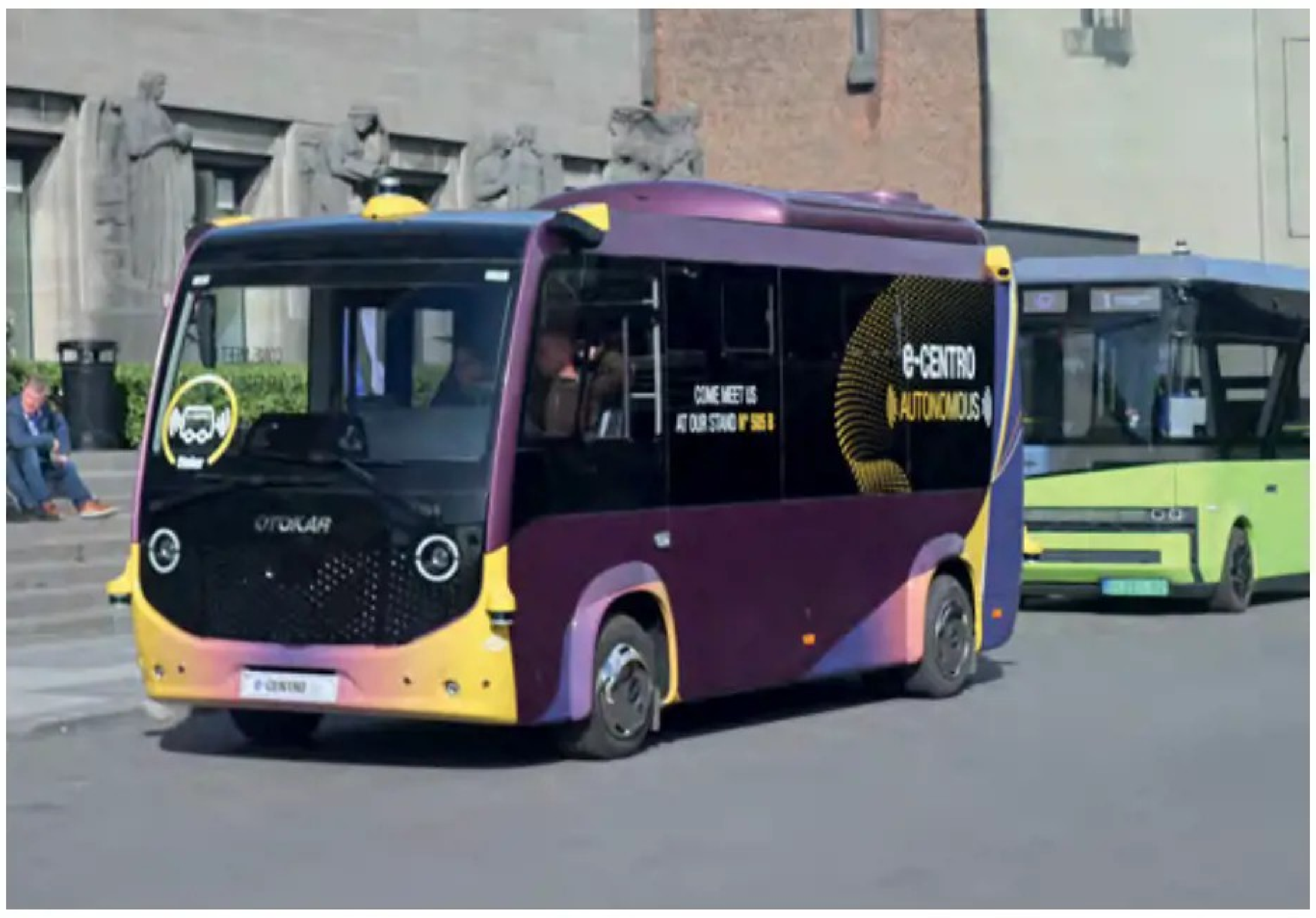
Each route is mapped painstakingly to ensure its safe operation and the autonomous e-Jest, which benefits from the application of artificial intelligence (AI), has 23 sensors, those at the front and back giving it the appearance of a large toy or robotic military vehicle.

Otokar demonstrated its 6.6m wheel-forward single-door e-Centro which underwent five days’ testing on public roads in Hungary earlier this year.

The Blees BB-1 is the first product of a company established in 2019 and a step towards its model BB-2, a genuinely driverless minibus due in 2028. It will be managed by a remote-control centre currently in development, enabling a single operator to supervise up to ten autonomous vehicles at once.

AUTONOMOUS
INTELLIGENCE
KARSAN
ATAK

Karsan demonstrated the autonomous e-Atak outside the exhibition halls.



The Otokar e-Centro with the green Blees BB-1 directly behind.

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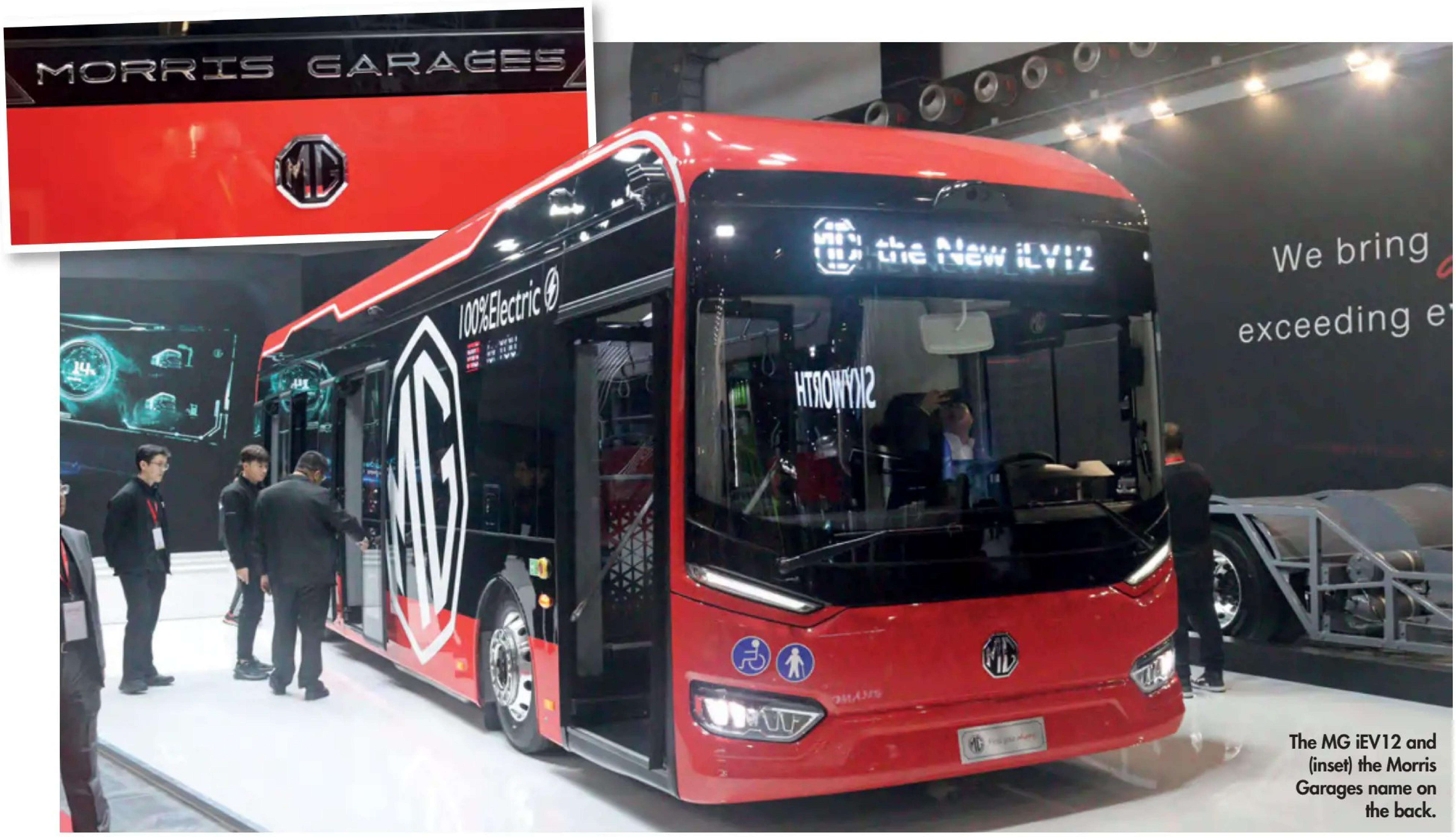


The MG iEV12 and (inset) the Morris Garages name on the back.

BRITISH LEGACY BRAND CATCHES A CHINESE BUS

One of the most surprising sights for British visitors to Busworld was a bright red single-decker in a corner of Hall 11, badged as an MG complete with the signature octagonal logo and with the name spelt out in chrome letters on the back as Morris Garages.

Those who appreciate British bus manufacturing history would also note the significance of the company behind this venture calling itself MG Commercial, for William Morris, who formed MG in 1924, also established Morris-Commercial in Birmingham that year to build vans and trucks. It built single- and double-deck bus chassis in the early 1930s, winning orders from the likes of Birmingham and Edinburgh Corporations and East Kent Road Car.

These days, little more than the MG name is British. SAIC Motor, one of China's largest state-owned car manufacturers (formerly Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation) acquired it in 2007 when MG Rover collapsed. It respects the heritage and has applied the brand to a range of mass market cars, many electric, made in China. It was unable to buy the Rover name at the same time but bought van and minibus builder LDV (now Maxus) in 2010 and manufactures its products in China.

SAIC also owns Chinese bus manufacturer Sunwin, which was in a 50/50 joint venture with Volvo from 2000 to 2016. MG Commercial essentially is Sunwin rebranded for Europe and trading unashamedly on the sports car heritage of the name.

Electric
e-mobi
irizar

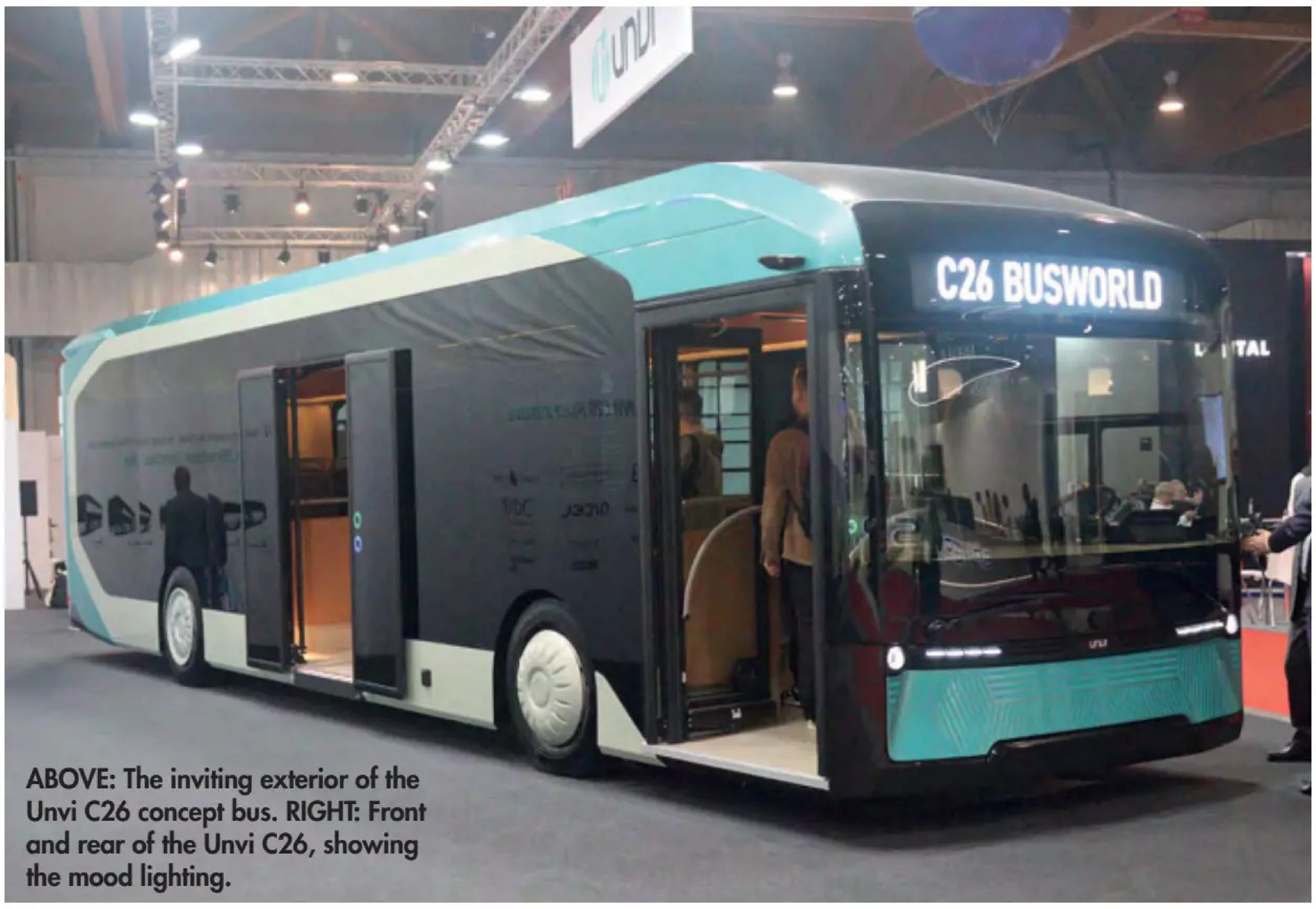
Irizar ie Bus Efficient — lighter and more energy efficient.

The iEV12 single-decker on the MG stand combines Chinese electric vehicle technology with a body designed in MG's London design studio, all of it built in China. The 19.5tonne gross weight B12E chassis, which also will be offered to third party coachbuilders, is manufactured from ultra-high stressed steel, as used in luxury cars, while the body is aluminium. The cell-to-pack batteries are installed within the chassis frame without compromising the low-floor area, an arrangement that – like BYD's blade batteries – gives a low centre of gravity.

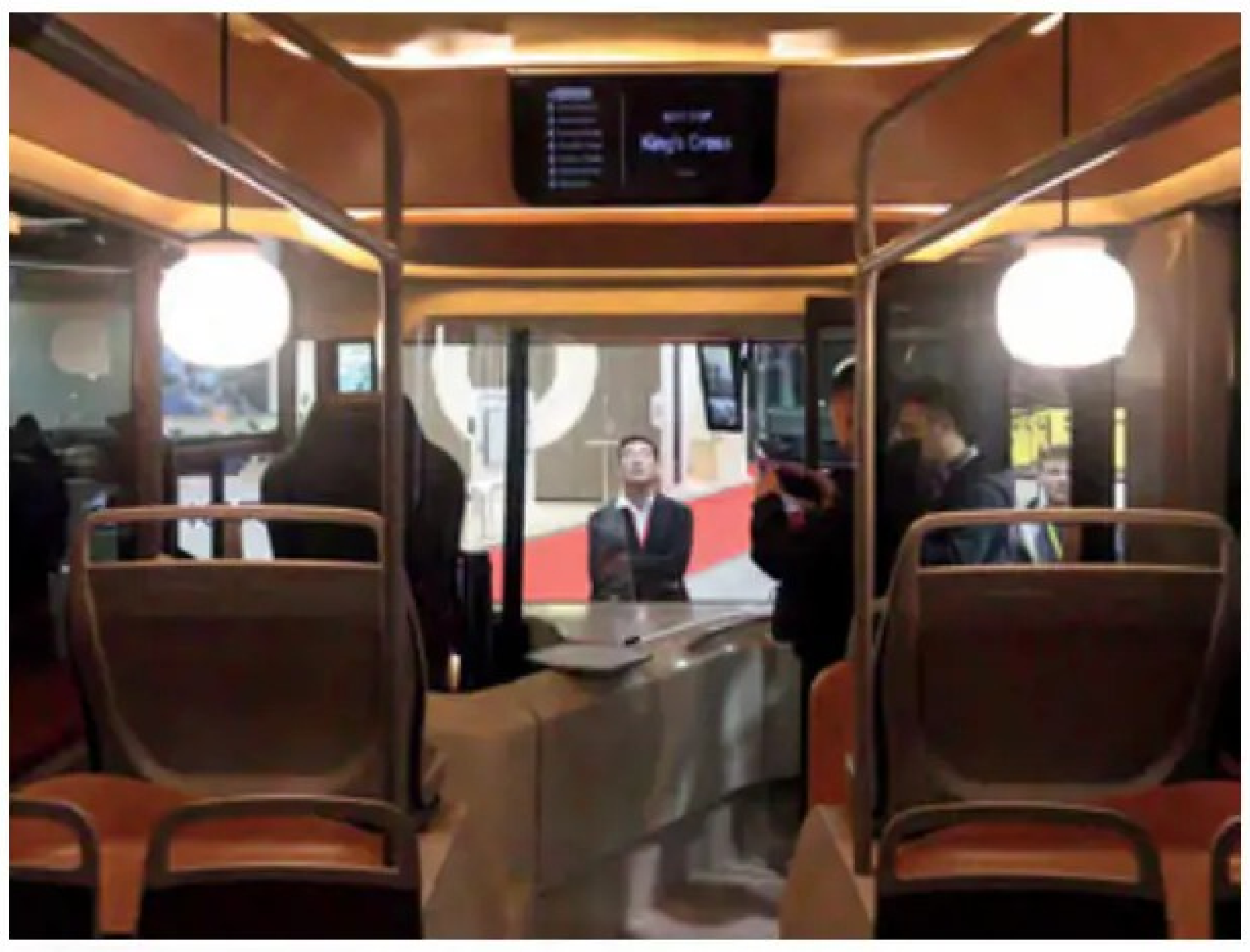
The smaller of two battery pack options is expected to give a range of 450km (280miles) on a single charge, a larger pack 530km (330miles). The first vehicle has undergone 500,000km (310,000miles) of testing in a variety of conditions and, once homologation is completed, demonstrators should be available by the second quarter of next year.

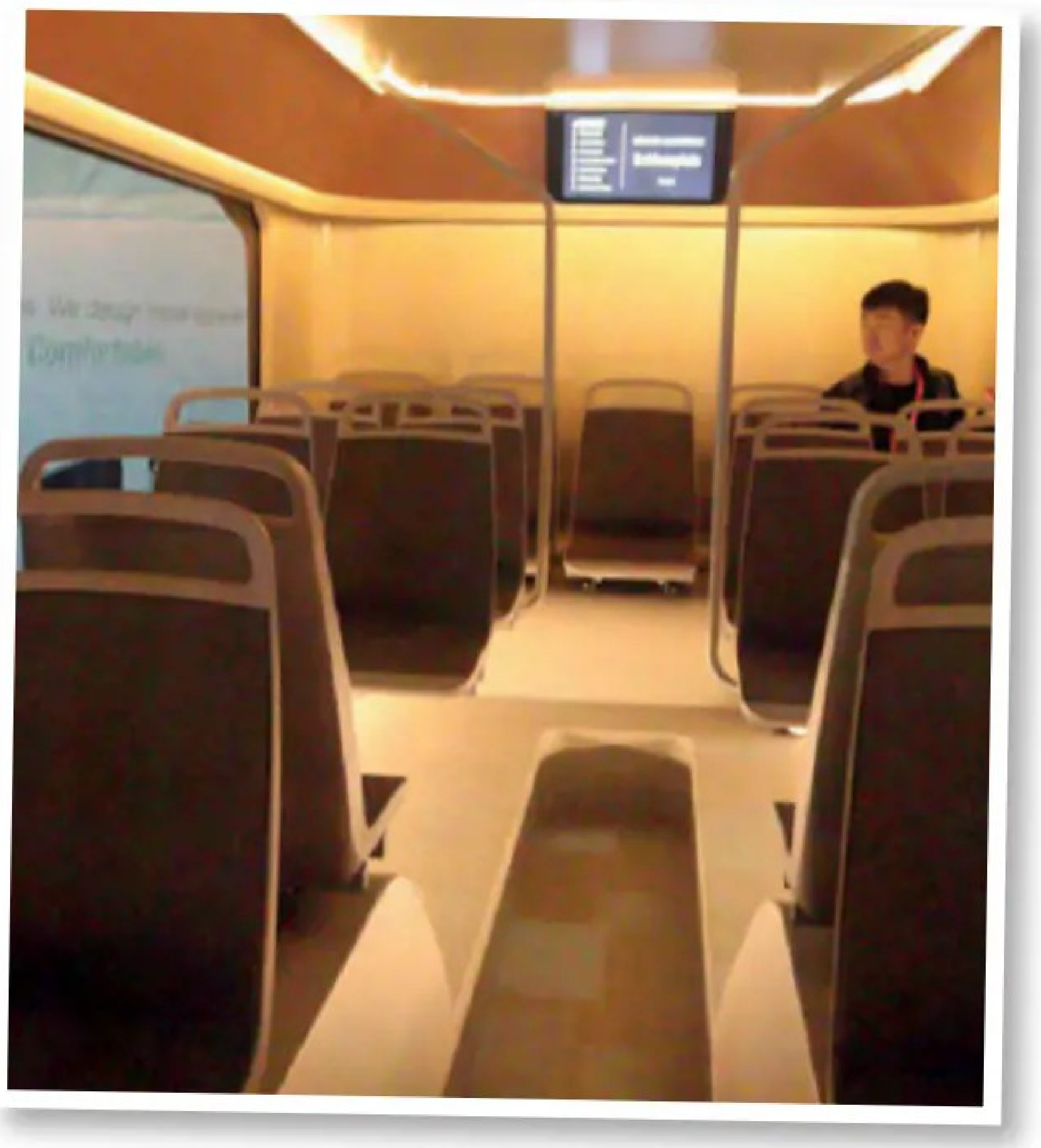
MG is looking initially at Spain and Italy for sales opportunities, countries where other Chinese manufacturers are active, and at the UK among others.

Having an aspirational brand that spans consumer and business-to-business markets works for Mercedes-Benz, Volvo and BYD, all of which sell cars, trucks and buses,



ABOVE: The inviting exterior of the Unvi C26 concept bus. RIGHT: Front and rear of the Unvi C26, showing the mood lighting.





in the case of Volvo even though its car business is now owned by Geely, a Chinese group. While that may help SAIC, success with buses will hang on MG's ability not simply to sell a quality product but provide the aftersales support that operators expect — one compelling reason why Yutong has been so successful in the UK.

Irizar goes Efficient

To sense the challenge MG and others face in entering the UK market, look no farther than Irizar. The Spanish manufacturer has had considerable success selling integral diesel coaches but remains a niche player with electric buses. Selling and supporting one product is a different proposition from the other.

Only Go-Ahead London has bought them so far in the UK, 48 of the rapid transit-style ie Tram for a Transport for London contract and the Kent Fastrack service, which followed two of what then was the i2 and now is the ie Bus, delivered in 2015. First Bus also is taking the ie Tram for a contract at Dublin Airport.

Perhaps the ie Bus will be more appealing with changes that Irizar unveiled at Busworld. This revised model is branded the ie Bus Efficient, the suffix that Irizar applies to some of its coaches to signify an improvement in fuel consumption. On coaches, a lot of that has been achieved by improving the aerodynamics of the bodywork to reduce the impact that a large fast-moving object has when battling headwinds on a motorway, like replacing wing mirrors with cameras and smoothing out sharp edges.

There is little scope to do any of that with an urban bus that stops and starts frequently and seldom exceeds 20mph. So, although this ie Bus is Efficient in name, the means of achieving it are different. It is around 1tonne lighter, which together with a more compact electric motor, a new generation of batteries and a new thermal manager reduce energy consumption by 10%.

The weight reduction also increases passenger capacity by 5% to 27 seated and a theoretical 55 standing passengers on a 12.2m three-door continental bus. The range on a full charge is said to be over 400km (250miles). Aerodynamics have been tackled, but out of sight of all but maintenance staff. The underside has been altered to take account of how air flows beneath the vehicle.

Imaginative interiors

Another Spanish bodybuilder attracting attention was Unvi, best known in the UK for midicoach bodies, and which is bringing its new full-size XL coach body to Britain and Ireland next year in partnership with Volvo. It displayed the C26, a concept single-deck body suitable for low-floor and low-entry chassis.

It was not clear whether this was on a powered chassis or simply a set of wheels, but that was beside the point. Its sleek external lines and tinted windows began a process of seduction that led visitors into an imaginatively designed and warmly-lit interior with sculpted ceiling, recessed strip lights and, over the front wheels, a pair of shaded light globes hanging from the ceiling by what looked like a flex but were solid pipes.

How practical all this might be in the harsh reality of bus operation is open to debate, but it offered a vision of how to improve the ambience of a bus by making it more inviting and less utilitarian. The judges who award prizes to the best products on show were moved to give it a special mention but are only allowed to make awards for vehicles in production.

Another concept vehicle was on the Caetano stand, an 18m hydrogen fuel-cell

SIGMA 8
zéro émission
JEBSEN & JESSEN

Wisdom Sigma 8 alongside the hydrogen-fuelled intercity bus.

H2.CityGold bendybus for bus rapid transit operation. Assuming an application where passengers pay before boarding and stops have island and nearside boarding platforms, its doors were on both sides, one pair in middle of the front section, two in the rear.

Consequently, there was no door on the front overhang, the space filled by two forward-facing single seats ahead of the front wheel, opposite the driver's cab. We could imagine these being bagged by children and bus enthusiasts of all ages, but would drivers tolerate such close proximity or having their kerbside view obstructed?

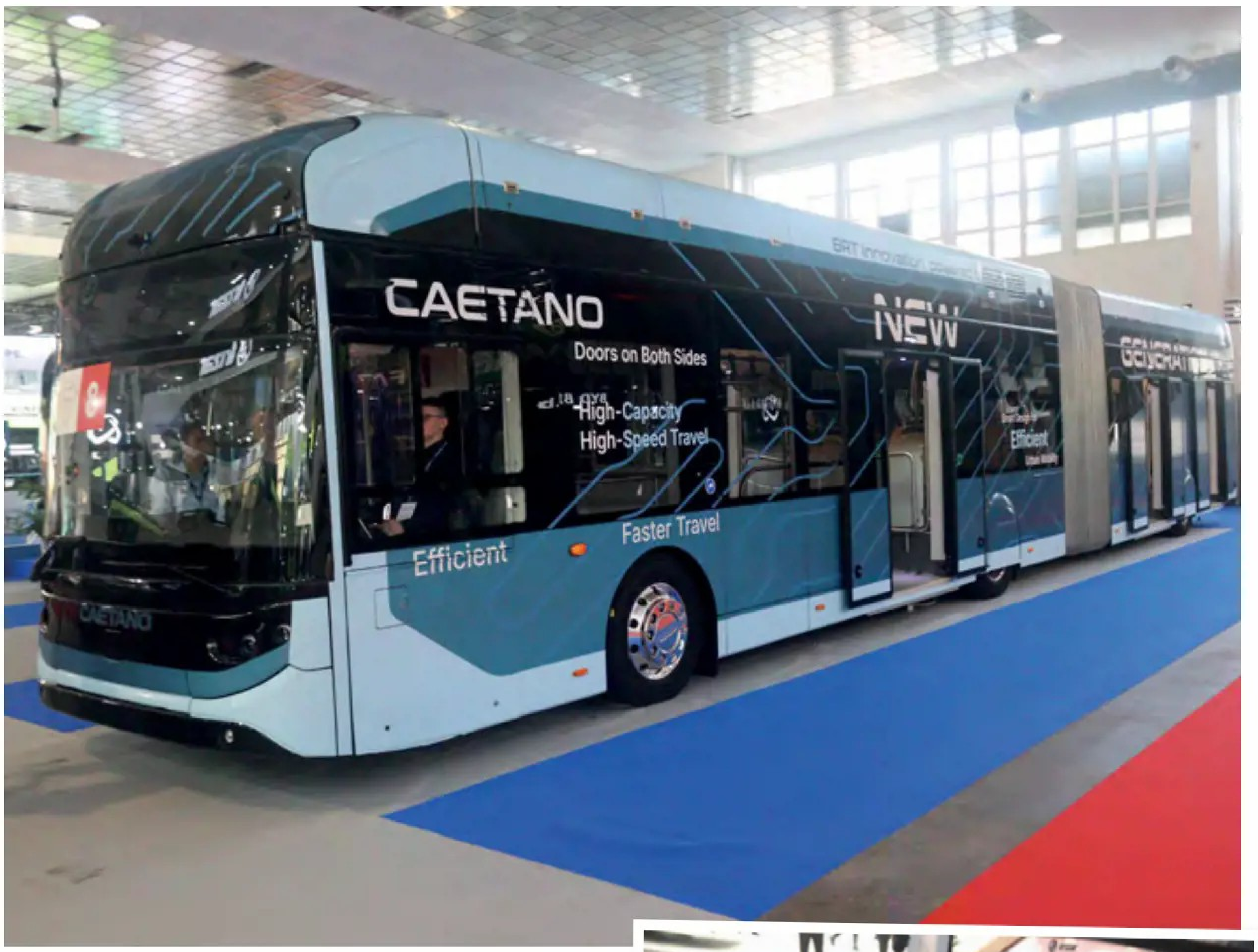
Readers who know about Morris-Commercial may also know that around 400 of London Transport's early trolleybuses, built between 1934 and 1937, had two side-facing seats next to the driver's halfcab, an arrangement discontinued for subsequent deliveries and removed from buses that had them.

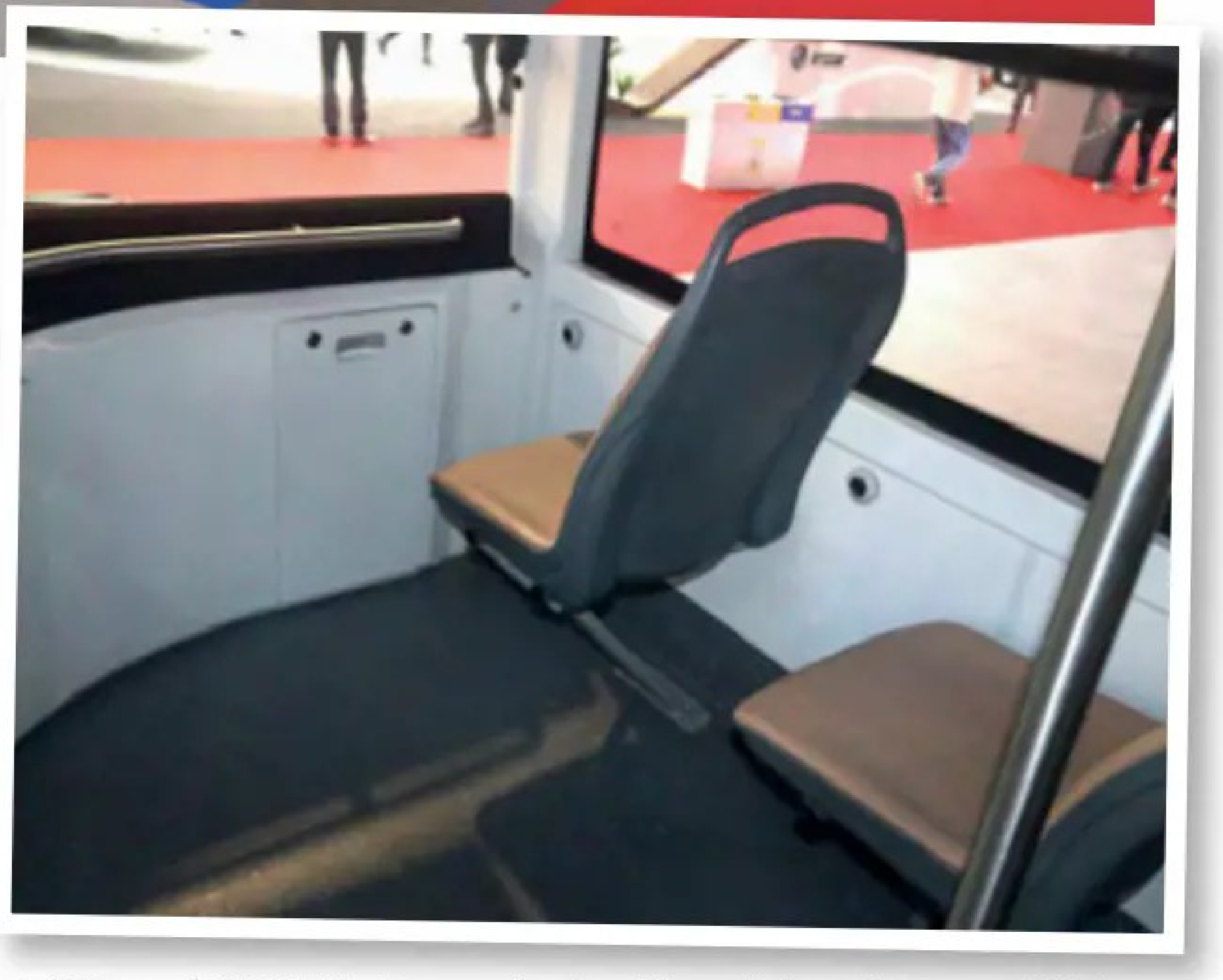
Chinese Wisdom, Vietnamese ambition

Looking familiar were the left-hand-drive Sigma 7 and Sigma 8 electric midibuses exhibited by Chinese manufacturer Wisdom Motor. Two years earlier, Rochdale-based Mellor was in Brussels with a stand promoting similar vehicles under its own name, hoping to build on early sales in the UK by winner orders from continental European customers.

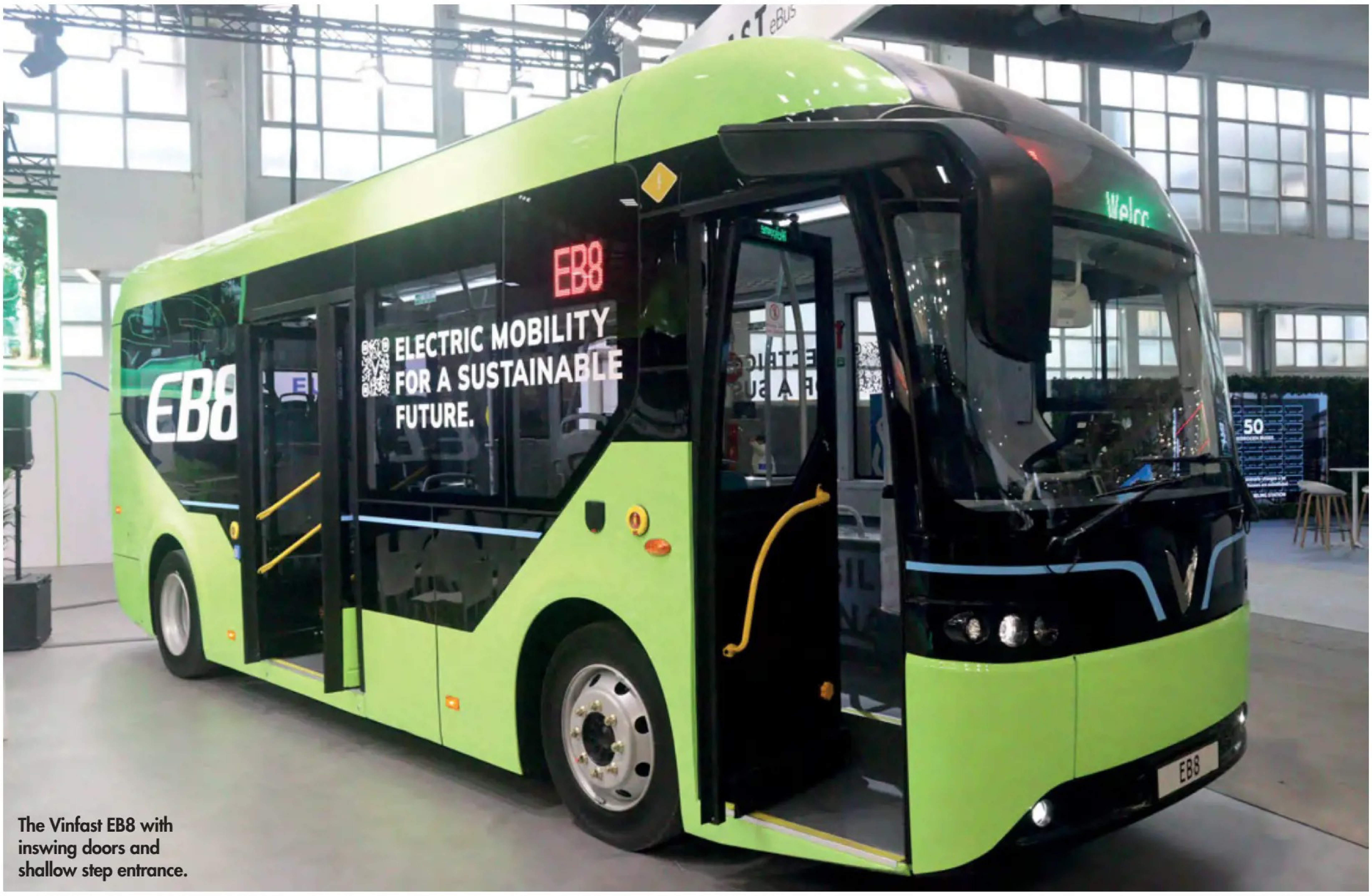
Within weeks, Mellor was in administration and the owners that rescued it decided against continuing with the Sigma in all its forms. Now Wisdom is promoting them by its own name. It displayed them alongside a 55-seat hydrogen fuel-cell intercity bus.

A new name and potential country of origin for European bus buyers to explore is Vinfast from Vietnam. This manufacturer of electric cars and e-scooters has decided that Europe will be the first export market for its electric buses. It showed examples of its 12m EB12, which has already been certified for Europe, and the 8m EB8 midibus which still awaits EU homologation and has steps in the entrance and exit and an intrusive footstool attached to a pair of inward-facing seats on the nearside front wheelarch. They come with a five-year unlimited bumper-to-bumper warranty, ■





TOP and ABOVE: Doors both sides of the Caetano BRT bendybus, two passenger seats next to the driver.



The Vinfast EB8 with inswing doors and shallow step entrance.

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PICTUREVIEW

LEADEN SKY

trinity walk

Arriva Yorkshire Wright Pulsar-bodied VDL SB200 1425 (CX58 EWH) with a dramatic leaden sky behind on Union Street, having left the bus station on a 106 to Hall Green. It is one of many of the type cascaded to all parts of the Arriva network, having been new to North West & Wales as 2695 17 years ago this November in 2008. PHIL HOWARD

Hall Green
106
arriva
GREGGS
LITTER
CX58 EWH

ARE YOU HEARING

You're getting safety insights through your internal channels – but what about the voices you're missing? Confidential reporting can help close the gap and reduce safety silence.

Not everyone is comfortable raising their health, safety, and wellbeing concerns through company channels, no matter how open your door is and how much you welcome them. Offering an independent channel makes it easier for their concerns to be heard.

Some might just feel too shy or self-conscious to raise a concern openly, or dread follow-up conversations and being involved in further consequences.

Safety in transport has come a long way since CIRAS confidential safety hotline started in 1996, but our members understand that even the best systems can't cover every eventuality. Where people are concerned, it's not always straightforward.

A snide comment, negativity, bias, favouritism, microaggressions, or just perceived inaction… it doesn't take much to discourage someone from doing the right thing and speaking up again. It has the same impact whether they've experienced this in their current workplace or long ago in the past.

Toxic behaviour can go under the radar at work, or worse, be ignored as people go along to get along. As a result, some might perceive the entire workplace culture to be toxic or only interested in listening to certain people, even if it's not true. They might then stay silent when they have something important to say about safety risks and the welfare of employees and the public, to avoid possible fallout from colleagues, clients, and even those with more senior responsibilities.

Every voice matters because we all spot different things from our individual perspective, whether that's from lived or professional experience. At CIRAS, we say that not raising your concerns is still a choice that you make, and that choice can have consequences. If it's not you speaking up, then who will? No one wants to be in the position of thinking, 'I wish I'd said something sooner and then this might not have happened.'

Making sure everyone can raise concerns, however they prefer to do it, gives peace of mind that you're not missing out on crucial safety intelligence. If you already know about the issue raised, a CIRAS report can highlight a communication gap, and potentially reveal additional information.

How CIRAS works

Our team of trained listeners on the end of the phone listen carefully and impartially. They ask questions to build a full picture of the issues, which helps them to write the report. It's also a chance to assess whether we can protect the confidentiality of everyone involved and so take a concern forward. If it's not something we can take forward, we'll always give guidance on the best option for having the concern heard and addressed.

We protect the identity of the person raising a concern to pass it to the right people at the relevant company, who can then act on it. The company receives the concern without knowing who raised it. We make sure anyone who shares a concern through us always gets a response from the company.

People use CIRAS to raise health, safety and wellbeing concerns not only for their own employer, but also for other companies, such as a client, contractor, or site owner. They can tell CIRAS their concern whether it's the first time they're raising it anywhere, or if they've already raised it through another channel.

FROM EVERYONE?

CIRAS
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Importantly, we don't take grievances, nor concerns about an individual's actions, as these would breach confidentiality. We also don't take concerns where there's an imminent risk of harm, as there are more suitable channels for reporting this in real-time.

Our process

1. Initial contact: this comes through our app, hotline, website form, or freepost.
2. Interview: we listen to the concern carefully and assess confidentiality.
3. Report: we send the company our report with no identifying information.
4. Response: the company has four weeks to respond. We share the response with the person who raised the concern.
5. Feedback: we ask the company and the person reporting for feedback.

Listening to hear

Some people make it obvious when they have a concern and voice it openly. Not everyone, though. Think about that colleague who drops subtle hints and cautious questions to indicate there's a problem, stopping short of stating it outright. Or maybe you've not noticed. Their health and safety concerns could be missed. Others remain silent but would say something if they could do so confidentially.

Many people believe they listen well, but are you listening to hear, instead of waiting your turn to speak your truth? Some may be listened to and heard more than others. By focusing on the concern and not on the person, confidential reporting removes the risk of conscious or unconscious bias.

Do you have the time and headspace to stop and listen with your full attention when someone comes to you with a concern? There could be distractions demanding your attention at the same time, taking you away from the present even if you're trying to listen.

There's also the risk of misinterpretation. We're all different, and what seems clear to one person as they're saying it, might not come across in conversation.

CIRAS is a safety net to capture the concerns that aren't getting through for one reason or another. We're able to provide extra listening, giving people the time and space they need to develop their concerns fully. Our questions can reveal deeper issues beneath something that's simple on the surface.

In addition, our members can access all CIRAS reports on our website, for cross-sector learning and insights. We also share key data regularly.

When it comes to safety and wellbeing intelligence, we're your partner in listening.

CIRAS
Confidential Safety Hotline

W: https://www.ciras.org.uk/rightcall

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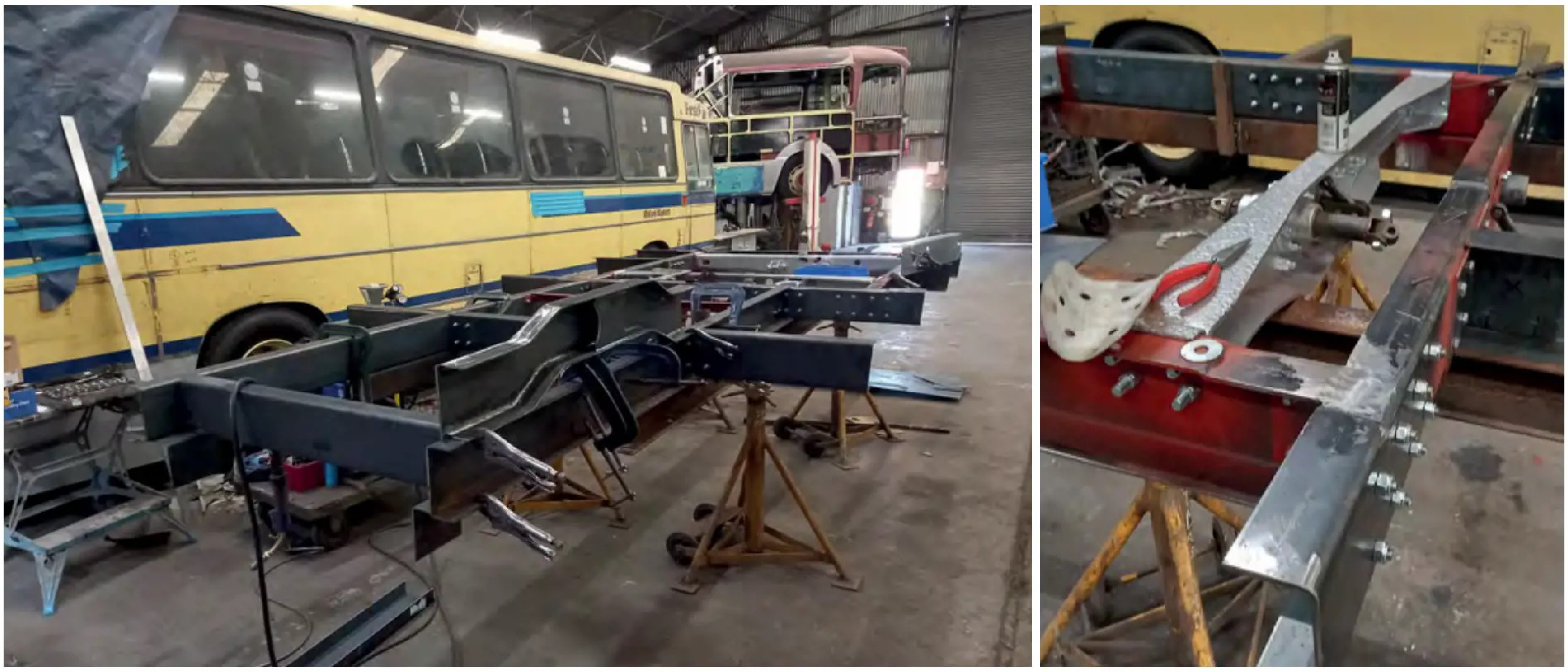


The mixture of new and reused materials can be seen readily as the frame starts to take shape. DAVID SHADBOLT

OLYMPIC REBIRTH HAS BEGUN

In the first of a regular series of updates on the project, Friends of King Alfred Buses chairman **JAMES FREEMAN** shares news of the exciting progress being made to rebuild its 75-year-old Leyland single-decker following a devastating fire two years ago

Since JAA 708, the Friends of King Alfred Buses' (FoKAB) severely fire-damaged 1950 Leyland Olympic (the first underfloor-engined bus in Hampshire), was transferred to the Scottish Vintage Bus Museum at Lathalmond this spring, work has proceeded to strip it down and start the reconstruction, using new materials for the most part but incorporating original material wherever possible.

Andrew Crockett is the brains behind this huge and comprehensive project, and he has lost no time in agreeing a three-year plan with FoKAB and getting stuck into the work.

The task has been eased significantly because we have access to all the original plans from Metro-Cammell Weymann (MCW), thanks to the far-sightedness of John Seale who saved thousands of these blueprint drawings when MCW's factory at Washwood Heath closed. They went to the Transport Museum Wythall and have now been passed on to The Bus Archive, which has generously given FoKAB full access to all the Olympic drawings. These comprehensive drawings constitute the instruction set to one of the biggest Meccano sets in history.

It gets better: one of the volunteers at Lathalmond, Callum Melrose, is an expert in computer-aided design (CAD). He has taken the original flat 1948 drawings and turned them into computerised three-dimensional versions, which can be used directly to cut steel to the exact shape and size shown on the drawings. Working closely with Andrew, Callum has provided the necessary material to feed direct to the manufacturers, who are able to download it and provide the precise materials, conforming to the original drawings. The results are stunning.

Armed with this fantastic fully prepared steelwork, Andrew has started piecing the chassis back together, replacing the bent and tortured steelwork with new, precision-made replacements.

In preparation for all this, the remaining framework was taken apart and all the units taken off to be tested for fire damage. Remarkably, a lot of the mechanical components have come through largely unscathed and wherever possible items like clutch and gearbox and running gear including axles are being overhauled for further use.

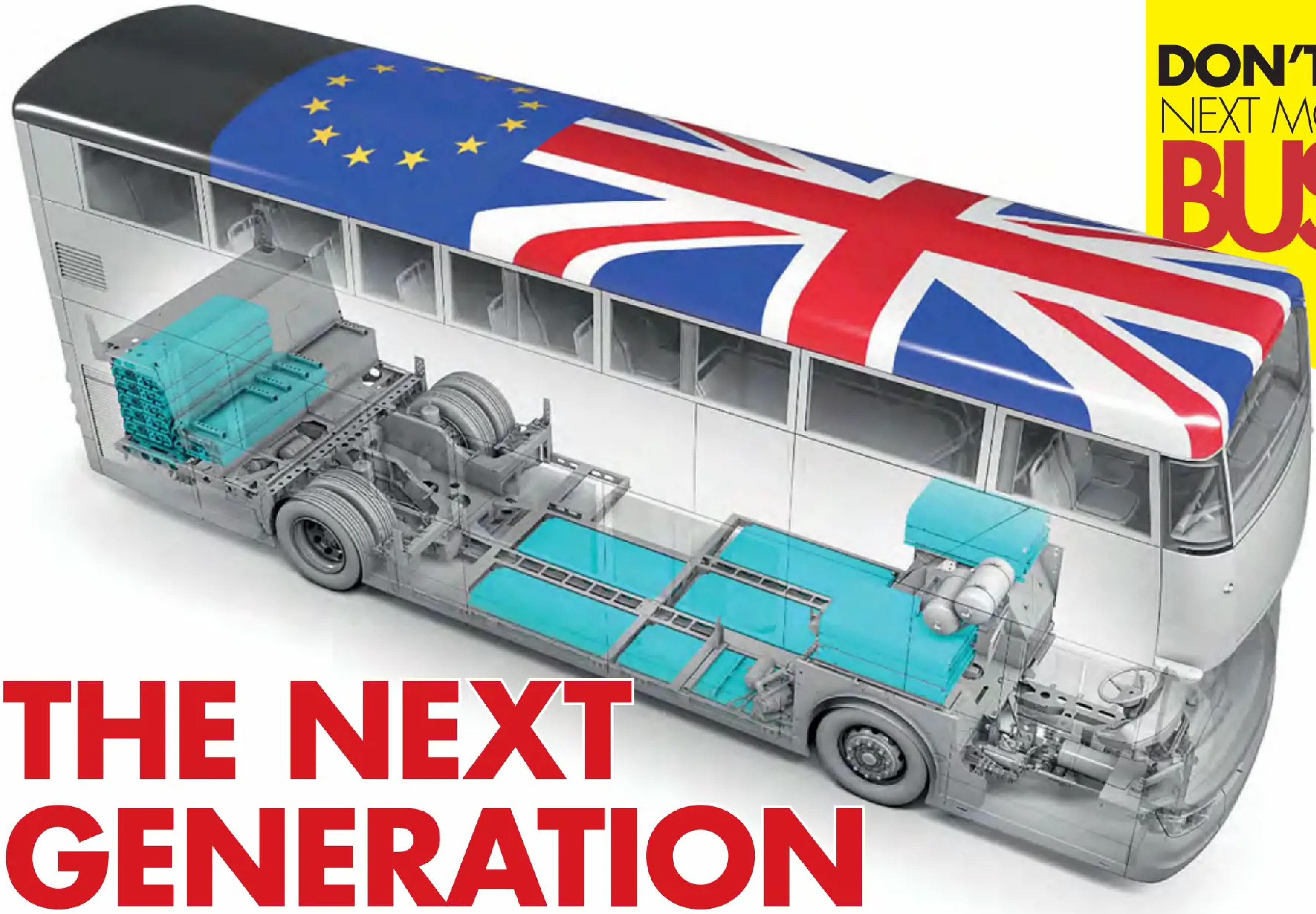
The plan is to complete the foundations of the framework and hang all the components back on to it and — hey presto — start the engine. This will mark the completion of the first phase of the restoration and is promised for the end of the year.

All this will have used up the first at least £100,000 of the available funding. The estimate to completion is £500,000 over three years and, so far, FoKAB has identified just over half that, so attention is now focused on raising the rest of the money. This project is now firmly underway, and we confidently expect to see JAA 708 back together by the end of 2027.

Luckily, much of the front of the Olympic escaped the worst of the inferno, although there is still an immense amount of work required to bring it back to life. DAVID SHADBOLT

Now is the time to contribute, please. The simplest way (and easiest for all) is a direct payment to FoKAB's account (sort code: 40-52-40, account 00009790) quoting 'Olympic' and your name or go to our website www.kingalfredbuses.org.uk and press the 'donate now' button. Or send a cheque to FoKAB at 2 Highcroft Road, Winchester, SO22 5GJ. Thank you. ■

DON'T MISS
NEXT MONTH'S
BUSES



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SCANIA'S START-UP

A tie-up with leading bodybuilder MCW brought the Swedish manufacturer to the UK with integral single- and double-deckers of a then advanced design

It was 56 years ago in November 1969 that Scania entered the UK bus market, challenging the newly formed British Leyland's near monopoly of the heavy-duty sector in a joint venture with a leading bodybuilder.

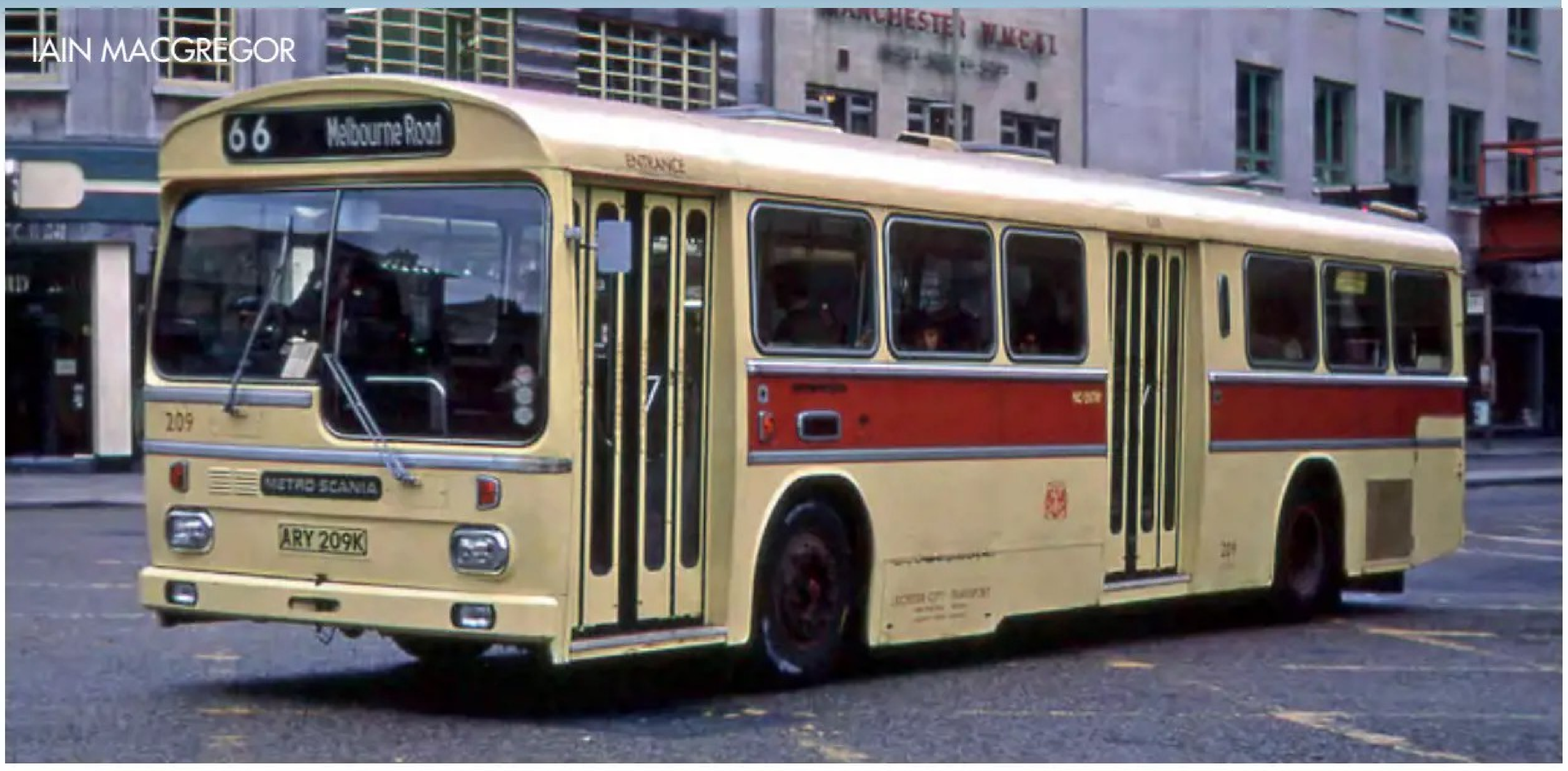
It teamed up with Birmingham-based Metro-Cammell Weymann (MCW) to produce the Metro-Scania, an integral construction rear-engined urban single-decker based closely on a model established in its home market in Sweden. The body was Scania's design and early examples used frames from Sweden. MCW's main alteration was at the front, with a barrel shaped windscreen like those fitted in AEC Merlins for London Transport, but with a deeper nearside half to give drivers a better view of the kerbside.

The BR110 driveline, with an 11litre turbocharged engine, torque convertor automatic transmission and air suspension, put it in a different league from the rear-engined British single-deckers introduced earlier the decade. It stood comparison with the Leyland National set to be available two years later.

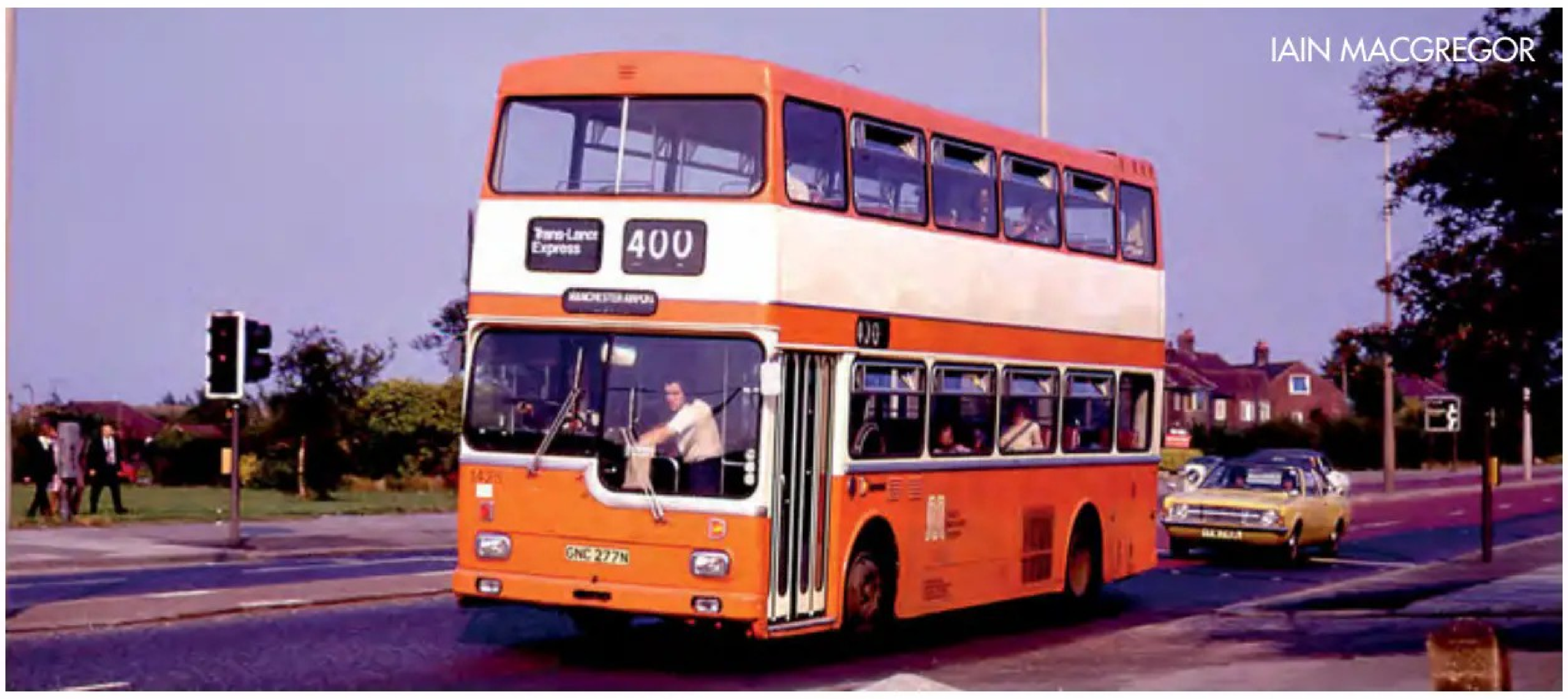
Leyland's development of integral buses — it was an odds-on certainty that a double-decker would follow on from the National — was a major threat to domestic bodybuilders, prompting MCW to find a new partner. Sweden only switched from driving on the left in 1967, so Scania was better equipped than many to manufacture right-hand-drive buses for the UK.

Excluding prototypes and demonstrators, the joint venture delivered 792 vehicles between 1970 and 1978. With demand for single-deckers falling, the Metropolitan double-decker was introduced in 1973, based on Scania's BR111. Its MCW body looked more British, and had the signature feature of the Metro-Scania's asymmetrical windscreen. Metro-Scania production ended a few months before the Metropolitan appeared. There were five times as many Metropolitans sold than Metro-Scanias, 661 to 131.

Launch customer for the single-decker was Leicester City Transport which bought 35 and followed them with 68 Metropolitans. It took delivery of 209 (ARY 209K) in November 1971, which Iain MacGregor photographed on Humberstone Gate in the city centre in September 1972. The biggest order for the Metro-Scania came from Newport Corporation, for 44, which it followed with ten Metropolitans. Following a trial with the last six single-deckers built, London Transport purchased 164 Metropolitans, the biggest order for that type.



IAIN MACGREGOR



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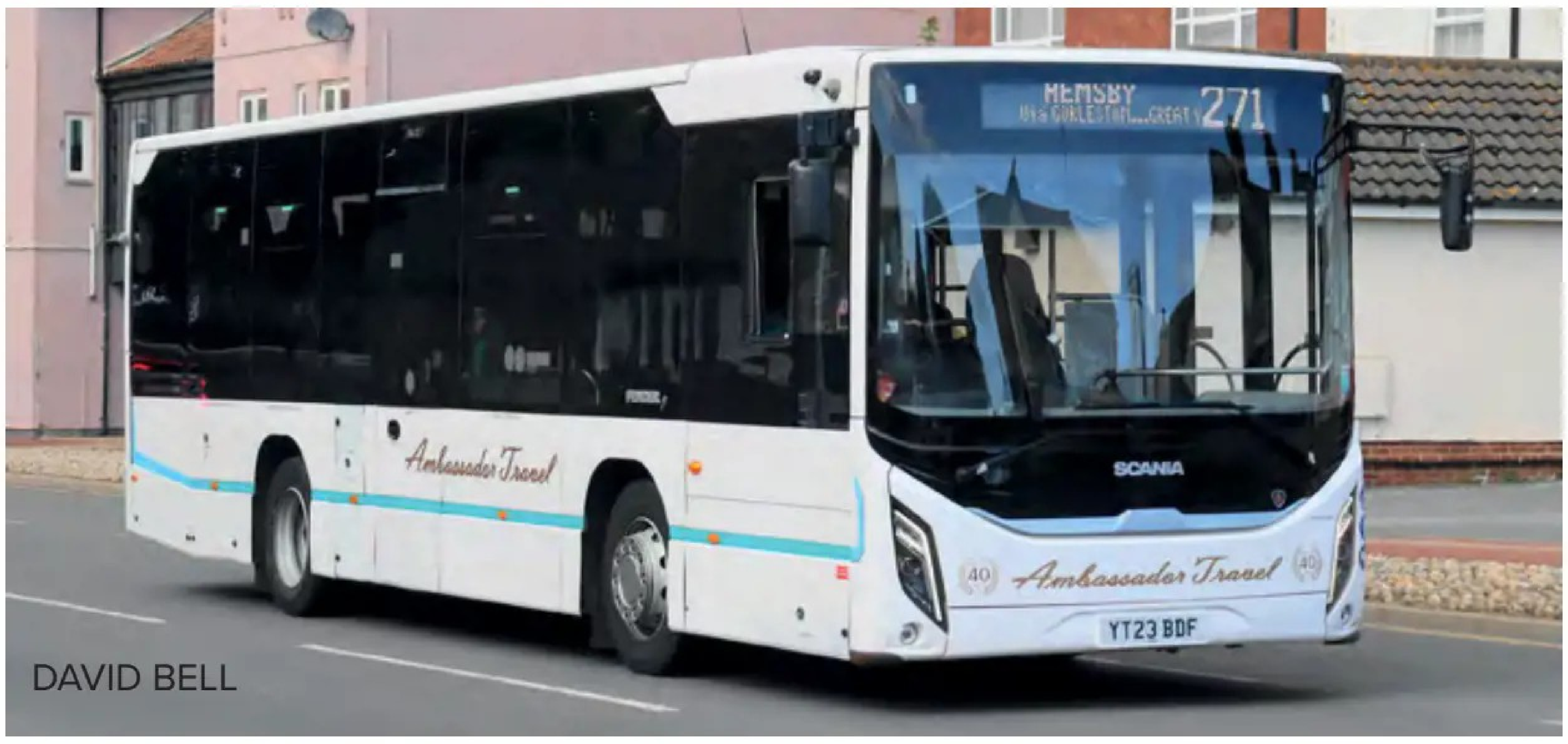
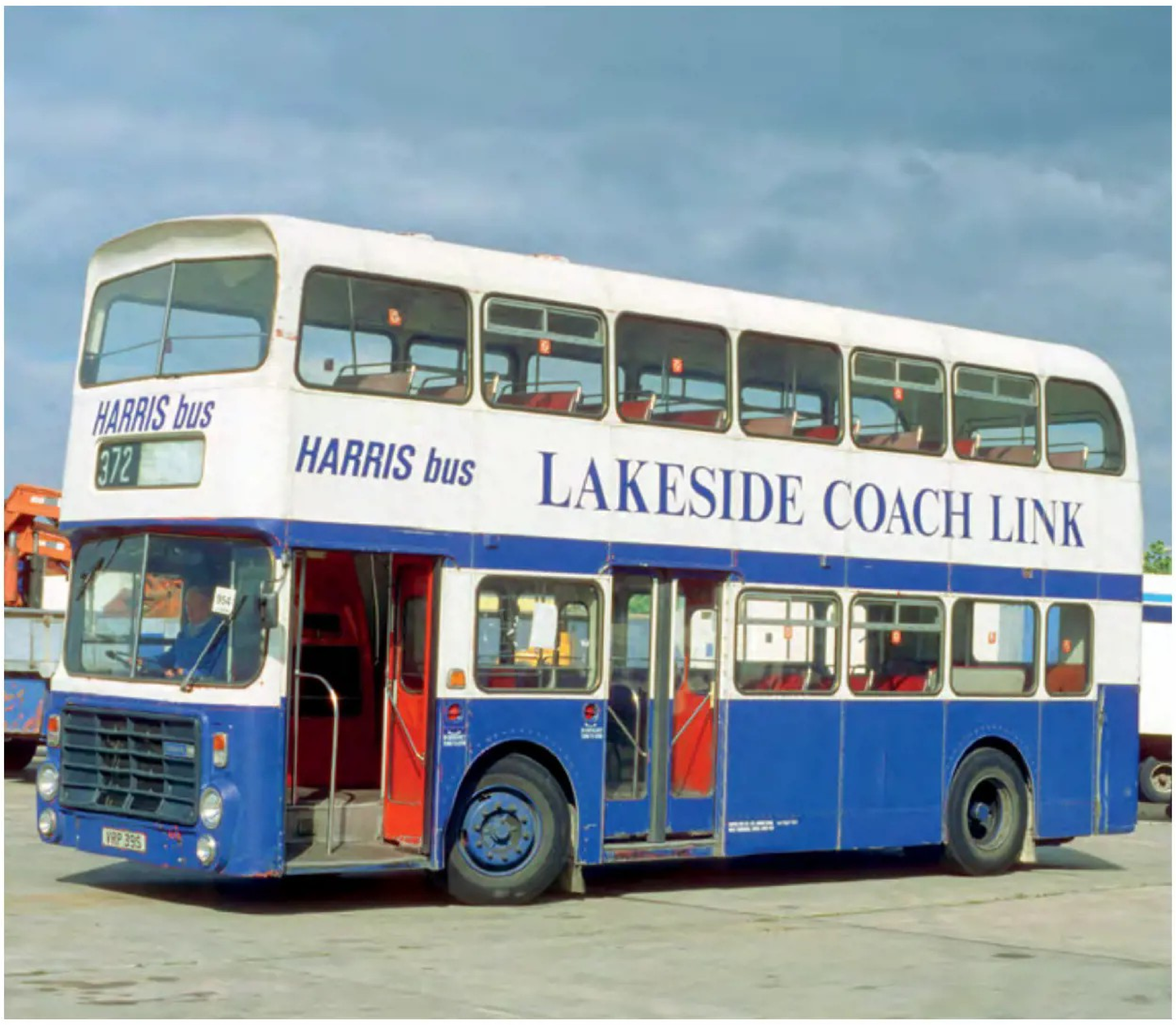


DAVID BELL

The models were represented in the fleets of all seven PTEs, ranging from a solitary Metro-Scania with West Midlands to 140 Metropolitans with Tyne & Wear. Greater Manchester 1425 (GNC 277N), passing through Wythenshawe in August 1975, was one of ten Metropolitans new a year earlier for the interurban Trans-Lancs Express, which joined 13 Metro-Scanias purchased when it was Selnec PTE.

Scania's most recent bus offering for the UK was the K280CB4 with Chinese-made Higer Fencer f1 body, announced in 2021. Fifteen have been sold to date. Ambassador Travel has two. David Bell photographed 617 (YT23 BDF) earlier this year in its home town of Great Yarmouth with graphics to mark the 40th anniversary of the company's creation in 1984 when the National Bus Company split Eastern Counties into smaller units, with Ambassador running its coaches. ■

Alexander AL-bodied Bristol VRTs were rare, bought by three municipals. **GRAHAM ASHWORTH** recalls one that a north Wales operator bought at a Manchester auction.



Bristol VRTs with Alexander AL bodies were built for just three operators, all of them municipals in three of the four home nations, and all with their own differences in specification.

Tayside took 25 of the long-wheelbase 33ft VRT/LL3 version with two-door bodies in 1977, 20 with Gardner 6LXB engines and five with the Leyland 501. The other 107 were standard wheelbase VRT/SL3s. Cardiff took 71 single-door ones between 1978 and 1980. Northampton's 36, delivered in 1977/78, had two-door bodies with the added quirk of radiused rear domes, whereas all the others had peaked domes front and rear.

Harris Bus, based in Grays, Essex, acquired seven of the Northampton VRs and ran them through the early 1990s, but VRP 39S, new December 1977, was the last one standing by September 1996, and was sent on a one-way trip to an auction at Belle Vue. It was bought by Express Motors at Bontnewydd, near Caernarfon, a regular buyer of stock there, who kept it for six years.

There might have been more than these 132, as Leyland offered 90 VRTs to Greater Glasgow PTE in 1973 or 1974 from an order cancelled by the National Bus Company. Had GGPTE not declined the opportunity, they most likely would have had AL bodies with radiused front and rear domes, and panoramic side windows. Fifteen early VRTs for Alexander (Midland), for delivery in 1969, were to have had lowheight Alexander AD bodies, but the order was changed to Eastern Coach Works, which supplied them in 1970. ■

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1832. Chelmsford / Southend. Essex. UK. Buses. July 2009. Around Chelmsford bus station and railway station, quite busy and late afternoon in Southend
2008. North Weald. Essex. July 2010. The annual rally at the Nth Weald airfield with morning arrivals in sunshine and a look at the line ups in the afternoon
2162. Colchester. Essex. UK. Buses. July 2011. Another location of much interest with the TGM/Arriva Network Colchester, First plus independents, a great mix.
2163. Harlow. Essex.UK.Buses. July 2011. Our second visit to Harlow, the route branded network Harlow Arriva / TGM operation downgraded, usual independents
2469. Essex. Archive. Buses. UK. 1986-1991. An amazing look back to early video taking us back to deregulation and beyond in Colchester, Southend and Thurrock
2470. Essex. Archive. Buses. UK. 1996-1999. Another fascinating dip into video never before put on DVD features Southend, Chelmsford, Colchester and Grays
2471. Essex. Archive. Buses. UK. 2000-2001. This time we have a more leisurely look at buses in Southend, Colchester and Chelmsford plus film in Basildon
2472. Essex. Archive. Buses. UK. 2001-2003. Our last film takes us to Southend in 2001 a first outing on DVD and to fill up a long running programme Colchester 2003
2880. Colchester. UK. Buses. June 2014. A bright sunny day to catch up with this Essex town with it's variety of operators and new ' bus station' they must be kidding!
2881. Southend and North Weald. UK. Buses. June 2014. A catch up on the Southend bus scene (yawn) then more sunny scenes at North Weald bus rally
3343. Colchester. UK. Buses. July 2016. Another warm Essex welcome with brilliant sunshine in all the wrong directions but it still came out well, always a treat
3344. Chelmsford. UK. Buses. July 2016. An early start and what a good job as the bus services get busy very quickly especially dropping off at the railway station
3345. Harlow + Stevenage. UK. Buses. July 2016. Bus station manager throws his weight around, rent a wreck buses can't believe it's the 21st century in Britain
3615. Chelmsford. UK. Buses. August 2017. Another rush hour comes to a close as we update our regular Essex bus coverage with all buses and operators seen
5549. Liverpool. UK. Buses. September 2025. The annual Liverpool MTT bus running day with scenes at the central crossing place near the Victoria statue
5550. Dudley. UK. Buses. September 2025. The buses remain at on street stops and we get there in time for most of the morning rush hour and school services
5551. Wolverhampton. UK. Buses. September 2025. The usual friendly welcome with buses and staff plus drivers in full happy waving action and lots of independents
5552. Oxford. UK. Buses. September 2025. Our regular catch up on the Oxford bus scene with many new electrics in evidence. Tour crowds are still theres in autumn
5553. Southampton Classic Bus running day. September 2025. A good number of buses with services starting around 10 am, static exhibits at the Guildhall
5554. Exeter. UK. Buses. September 2025. It is Monday morning and with the autumnal sun it takes a while for the optimun shots to be captured also has local services
5555. Plymouth. UK. Buses. September 2025. Lots new to see here, many electric just arrived plus buses on load from Stagecoach around the country, road works
5556. Wakefield. UK. Buses. October 2025. Always busy and friendly, some tatty Arriva buses and the who knows what will turn up from Yorkshire Buses independent
5557. Bradford. UK. Buses. October 2025. The 2025 city of culture is a huge joke, hassle from beggars and drunks, concrete jungle, friendly bus drivers as ever
5561. Yorkshire Dales Bus Running Day. UK. October 2025. A really super bus running day with full marks for content, frequency, variety and location, say lots of friends
5562. Swindon. UK. Buses. October 2025. The new bus facility along the dual carriageway with a stop for every service, crazy but its true, makes for great filming
5563. Cheltenham. UK. Buses. October 2025. My second try at this location, still difficult with low sun breaking through, a lot less buses these day, hard going here.
5564. Luton. UK. Buses. October 2025. Luton at its best, rush hour at the interchange with friendly drivers and interested passsers by. Light even clouds were just so!
5565. Stevenage. UK. Buses. October 2025. Our second visit to the latest bus station, reasonable amount of bus activity and generally all very friendly drivers
5566. Milton Keynes. UK. Buses. October 2025. Another superb visit, pleasant light cloud - you could point the camera in all directions and of course we did just that!

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Remembering Michael Dryhurst

It was sad to read of the passing of Michael Dryhurst and I would like to add a small addition to his obituary.

In Leicester he will be remembered for his part in the saving of the now famous Leicester City Transport AEC Renown 329 for without him and his colleagues it is unlikely to have been preserved.

Michael was a member of the group of youthful enthusiasts led by Prince Marshal who had got together to purchase a bus for preservation in 1956. This was T31, which became the very first bus to be bought by private individuals for preservation in the UK. This was followed by three other single-deckers until in 1958 it was discovered that Leicester were about to dispose of their remaining three-axle double-deckers.

John Cooper, the LCT manager, was approached and was amenable to the purchase and offered one to them for £85. LCT chose 329 as the best of the batch and gave it a service and a tank of fuel. On arrival in London, it was decided that each of the group members would be allocated a vehicle to look after and young Michael got the Renown.

Later in the year, a rally was arranged at the AEC works at Southall. Naturally the Renown attended and was driven by Michael, the very first time he had driven a bus!

And it won an award. Times were different in those days.

Michael was very helpful when I was putting together a book about 329, and I was able to include some of his reminiscences. He will be greatly missed. RIP Michael.

Bob Fleming,
Leicester

Although I never personally met Michael Dryhurst, I grew up reading and enjoying his articles, letters and photographs down the years although initially, I wasn't aware that he was V H Darling when I first started reading Buses Illustrated back in the mid-1960s.

Your explanation concerning the origin of his pen name and the way he signed himself off in correspondence and emails made me smile. He clearly was an intelligent and observant man, both in terms of his film industry profession and the hobby that he clearly was so passionate about. He'll be sorely missed, that's for sure.

Paul Bryant,
Hampshire

I was pleased to see that Michael Dryhurst's last article was about Massey Brothers' coachwork.

As I am sure you know, when Leyland stopped building coachwork for buses Wigan Corporation split subsequent orders more or less evenly between Massey and Northern Counties. It is many years since I was a small boy growing up in Standish, just north of Wigan, but I did wonder why some Wigan buses displayed their route number and destination side by side and others had the route number above the destination.

Ian Allan publication in the British Bus Fleets series had the answer - the side-by-side display was on early postwar Leyland Titan PD1s with Leyland bodies and the above-and-below display was on later PD2s and PD3s. It was good to see that the preserved PD2 was showing the right number for one of the Wigan to Standish services.

It may also be of interest that Northern Counties' first bodies for underfloor engine buses were on four Wigan Leyland Royal Tigers which, by the early 1970s, were on school services. It was certainly an experience to ride up the steep hill just before arriving at my secondary school on one of those - when the driver changed down halfway up, the bus seemed to lurch backwards!

John Abbott,
Hull

I myself never met Michael Dryhurst, but as with all of us I looked with interest at much that he wrote or photographed over the years.

However, the story of the now-legendary V H Darling was I think more complicated than set out.

The article on the Scottish holiday they took was published in *Buses Illustrated* in early 1960, not 1961, which must date the holiday itself to the summer of 1959. The difference is important, in that at that time he was obviously engaged to Valda Darling, but the records show that they married in Brighton in the October to December quarter of 1960, so before the holiday articles were published.

The marriage did not last and his wife remarried by the end of the decade and was shown as still living on the South Coast earlier this year. Thus, when the name V H Darling was being used, Michael Dryhurst was either engaged to or married to her, so she must have known about the use of the pseudonym.

Michael Yelton,
Cambridge

Essex experience

I write in reply to the letter entitled Essex Frustrations by your correspondent John Cockell of Hatfield Peverel (You Write, *Buses* September).

Firstly, John as a bus driver working for First West of England I can understand your frustrations.

Bus stops come under the council so that the bus operating companies cannot change anything in them but have to have routes registered with the councils. As regards diversions the longer the notice given to the BOCs the better as some drivers might need to be trained for the diversionary route (all drivers are given training on the proper route) as I have found when told to turn down a named road I don't know the area well enough to know the road names, so in the light of little or no information on bus stops or revised timetables please see your local council and not whinge to the BOCs.

The second point and I don't know about First Essex but our buses are re-painted off site so it will be a matter of getting a bus in by appointment to be done so rather than have it sitting in the depot not earning anything it will be out in service earning revenue. We have buses in pink York University livery on some of our routes, so it just goes to show that it is not only Essex.

I hope this answers your queries.

Pete Adams,
Stoke

Colour confusion

The recent letter from John Cockell (*You Write*, *Buses* September) expressing concerns about the many different liveries in his area reminded me of a very upsetting incident from the 1980s.

A genial, mature bus driver working out of Kentish Bus's Dunton Green Garage was chatting to me and the subject of the new colour scheme cropped up. He told me of an incident at Sevenoaks Bus Station soon after London Country South East became Kentish Bus.

He was driving a service to the nearby village of Noah's Ark, which was probably a once every two hours service. He pulled into the bus stand where an elderly lady was standing. She showed no movement towards the bus, so he closed the doors and drove off.

Later on in his shift, he was distressed to find the old lady still there, shaking with cold and barely able to stand. She had been waiting for a green London Country bus, unaware of the new colour scheme.

Sevenoaks Bus Station was never really busy, but wouldn't one think that someone could have come to her aid?

The driver's parting words to me were "Refuse to get old. Stay as young as you can." 40 years or more later, and unable to get the mental image of that poor lady from my mind, it's a philosophy I'm sticking to.

Colin Evans,
Bromley

Red and White bridge strike info

In 1966 a Red and White 70-seater decker hit an arch bridge at Rogerstone on route 103 Cardiff-Tredegar at approximately 21:00.

Does anyone remember its fleet number? It was one of 20 70-seater deckers owned by Red and White.

I have been informed all were still in service in 1974. The roof was taken off in the accident. I was the first ambulance of three on the scene and I took nine shocked passengers to hospital. Thankfully there were no passengers on the top deck.

I would be very pleased to hear any information any of your readers may have.

Ted Hull,
Chepstow

Isle of Man example

Mark Bailey ("Impressed by the Isle of Man" *Publicity Matters*, *Buses* October) correctly identifies the Island as an exemplar of excellent public transport information, which makes it easy for the visitor to use the equally-excellent bus network.

Mark travelled by air, but if he had gone by sea he would have found that the excellence becomes apparent before even reaching the island, as copies of the all-Island timetable book are easily obtained on the ferry. Armed with this publication, the passenger knows exactly which tickets would be best for their stay before arriving at the Sea Terminal, whilst the maps it contains make it easy to reach the nearby Douglas bus station and therefore everywhere else on the island.

The experience for a Manx resident wishing to visit the mainland could not be more different. North Lancashire, with its proximity to the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales, is a prime tourist destination, but neither the Douglas Sea Terminal nor the ferry itself have any public transport information available for the mainland.

At Heysham Port, the adjacent railway station has a departure list that confirms the time of the once-daily train to Lancaster, which departs two hours after the arrival of the morning ferry. The only alternative for foot passengers is to walk 1,500 metres to the nearest bus stop from where buses depart to Morecambe and Lancaster.

As for information on routes and times, on arrival at Lancaster bus station one might find a portable leaflet rack with a random, but usually incomplete, selection of Stagecoach timetable leaflets. Even if the full set is available there is no way of knowing this as no overall guide or even list of leaflets is produced. Timetables for non-Stagecoach services are produced by Lancashire County Council and, if you are lucky, you might be able to pick them up at the city's library, although this is some distance from the bus station and the supply is not guaranteed.

Mark chose to buy a £42 ticket that gave him three days unlimited travel on buses, trams and steam trains throughout the island. The nearest equivalent to that in North Lancashire would be Stagecoach's "North West Explorer" at £28 for three days. This covers an area larger than the Isle of Man, but of course excludes non-Stagecoach services or attractions such as the Ravenglass & Eskdale steam railway or the Blackpool trams. Adding just one round-trip on each of these systems would more than double the cost.

As a regular visitor to both the island and to mainland Europe I find the public transport system on the former very much in line with what I would expect in the latter, with, sadly, Great Britain very much out of step with best practice elsewhere.

Jim Davies,
Lancaster

Hook Park

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I was most interested to read Mark Lyons' piece in *Buses* November regarding the proposed Hook Park development bordering the Esher by-pass near Hook Junction. Sixty years ago the area became part of Greater London and the neighbouring area of Hinchley Wood remained in Surrey with six buses per hour (2x72, 2x152, 2x715) connecting the two communities.

Today, thanks to political boundaries, only the once per schoolday 467 bus connects the two areas. Many positioning buses from FW and TV run light along the A3 to and from Tolworth and I suggested that perhaps the 265 be extended to Hook Junction (Ace of Spades) to alleviate the overcrowding, particularly at school starting and finishing times, on route K1 using SDE vehicles. No acknowledgement was received from TfL.

Unfortunately, TV (First Bus) continues to use single door type buses instead of two door vehicles on route K2, which had a frequency reduction on June 28. The K2 began as a shoppers' express route with Routemasters but when Hoppa buses replaced route 216, new Metroriders were used because of the extension to Kingston Hospital.

Originally the route through the Berrylands Estate was served by LT country area double-deckers on route 418. Occasionally I drove Metrobuses from NB on the 216 but today double-deckers are prevented from using the route through Berrylands because of low trees. The low railway bridge at Norbiton is also another obstacle on route K2.

I recently found the website of Roger French which lists the PVR reductions and I had previously thought that the reductions in outer London subsidise the new loopy routes that are being introduced at the drop of a hat. I doubt that Chessington will ever receive a Superloop or Crossrail and the Hook Park developers proposal to run a shuttlebus to Chessington North would probably be a five minute wonder, as most rail users would use Surbiton Station with its shorter journey time to Waterloo.

Every Sunday and most bank holidays, Chessington loses half of its bus services: Routes K4 and 467 do not run, 465 reduces from 30 to 60 minutes and the 71 reduces to every 12 minutes. When I moved here, we had routes 65, 265, 468 and 714 with the 468 running every 15 minutes on Sundays between Epsom and Chessington. Today as previously mentioned no link exists that day. We would gladly welcome any extra services, but I suspect we will only get PVR reductions which seems to be the norm in the suburbs.

The attached picture is of RM729 passing The Bun Shop pub in Berrylands Road. Both the bus and pub are long gone!

Graham Burnell,
Chessington

Judging success of franchising

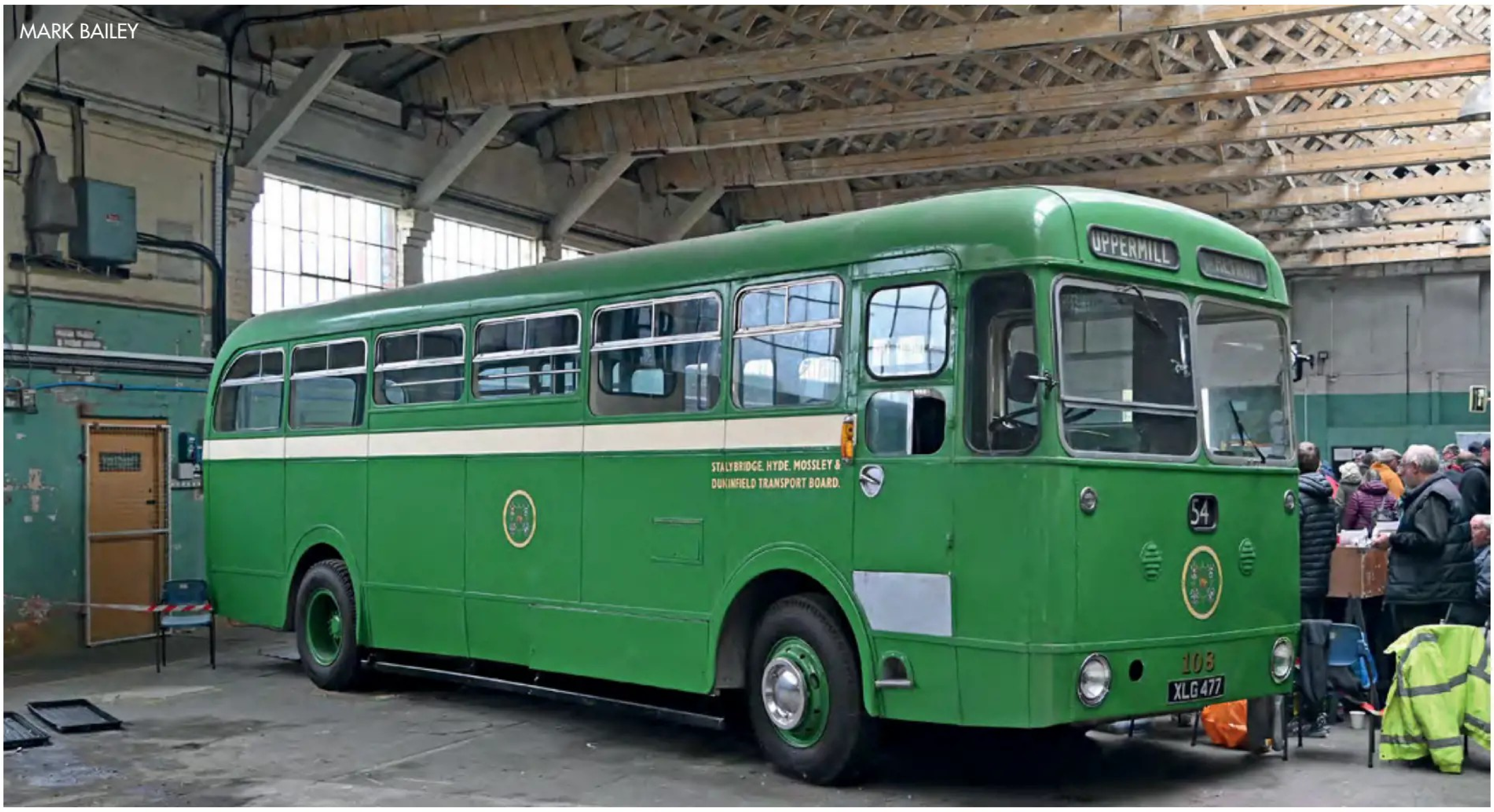
How will we ever know if franchising in Liverpool, Manchester, or anywhere else is a success? Clearly it achieves the socialist objective of minimising the dreaded profit, i.e. that it is better for capital investment to be raised through taxation, than by getting it from private investors who expect profit as the payment for their investment.

But apart from that, where are the measurable targets? Exactly how much taxpayer money will/have all the new buses and public sector administrators cost? How many millions of taxpayer money will it cost for every percent of improvement?

If all this taxpayer money is to be spent on buses, which would provide greater service improvement, public administration, or by providing increased grants to private sector operators? Who is going to provide funding when this huge peak of new buses all come up for replacement at the same time? How will the remaining UK bus-builders survive, if new bus investment proceeds in a huge peak and then a famine?

It would be very interesting if Buses magazine could discover and publish more of these figures.

Clive Johnson,
Luton


MARK BAILEY

Wirral running day hangs out at Hooton

Closure of the Wirral Transport Museum meant that this year's Wirral Running Day, on October 5, was relocated from Birkenhead to Hooton Hangars at Ellesmere Port.

The site, centred on three aircraft hangars erected in 1917 for the Royal Flying Corps, occupies part of the former RAF Hooton Park air base which closed in 1957. Vehicles operated on routes radiating from the site, while others were displayed outside or within one of the historic hangars.

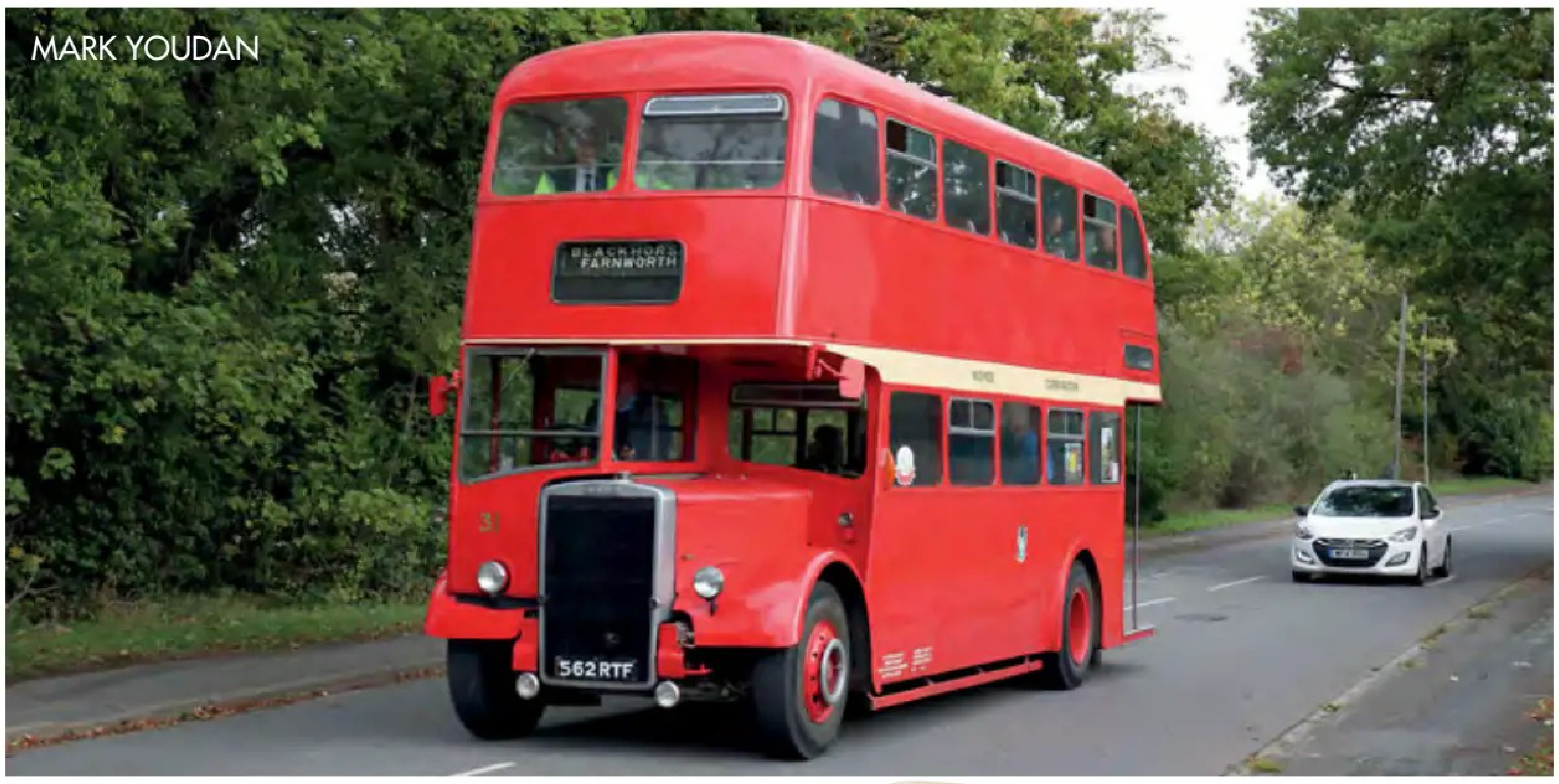
One parked inside was Stalybridge, Hyde, Mossley & Dukinfield (SHMD) Transport Board 108 (XLG 477), a 1956 Atkinson Alpha PL745H with 34-seat centre entrance Northern Counties body with space for up to 26 standing passengers, 12 of them in the seat-free centre. This was one of the last of 12 centre-door buses that SHMD bought from Northern Counties between 1952 and 1956 to encourage passengers to occupy the full length of the saloon. There were five single-deckers (a Daimler Freeline and five Atkinsons) and seven double-deckers (six Daimler CVG6s and the unique Atkinson PD746).

SHMD bought all its bodies from Northern Counties from 1950 until 1967, two years before its operations were absorbed into Selnec PTE.

Traditional halfcabs included Widnes Corporation 31 (562 RTF), a 1961 East Lancs-bodied Leyland Titan PD2/40 owned by the North West Museum of Road Transport in St Helens.

Photographed at Shorefields, New Ferry was the last Alexander AL-bodied Leyland Atlantean new to Merseyside PTE in September 1984, 1070 (B926 KWM), preserved in the 1990s Wirral Peninsula Buses livery of MTL North. This has the sixth last Atlantean chassis built for the home market, the last 9.4m AN68/1R and was the only Merseyside example with a B-prefix registration.

The five 10m AN68D/2R chassis built slightly later went to three Lancashire municipals. One with Northern Counties body for Fylde was new in October 1984 and was the last home market Atlantean into service. Two with East Lancs bodies entered service in Blackpool in September 1984; they also had B registrations. The last two of the five chassis, also bodied by East Lancs, had A registrations and went to Lancaster in July 1984. The Fylde and one of the Blackpool pair are preserved. Atlanteans were built for export to Singapore, Kuwait and Jakarta in 1984-86.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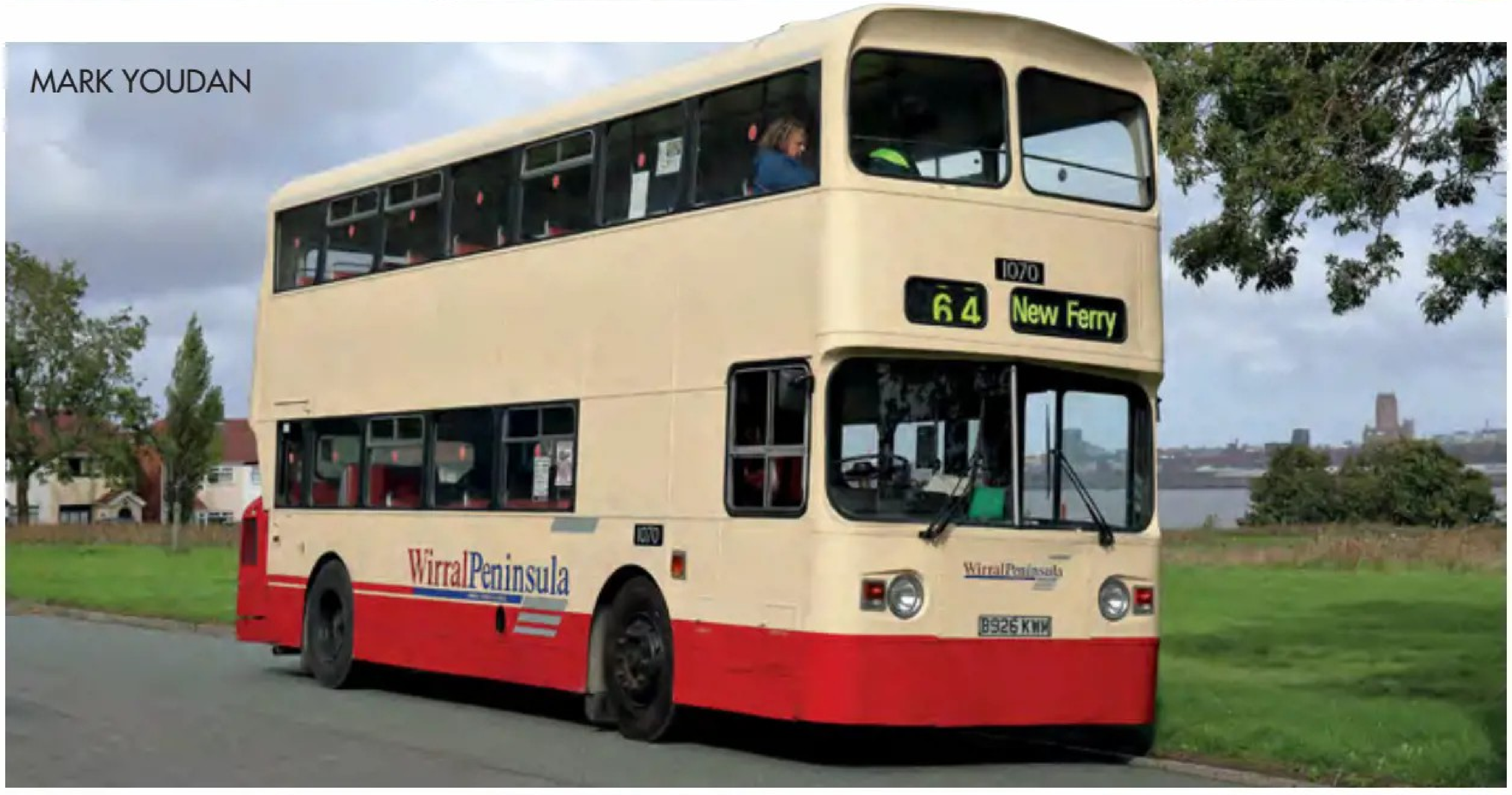
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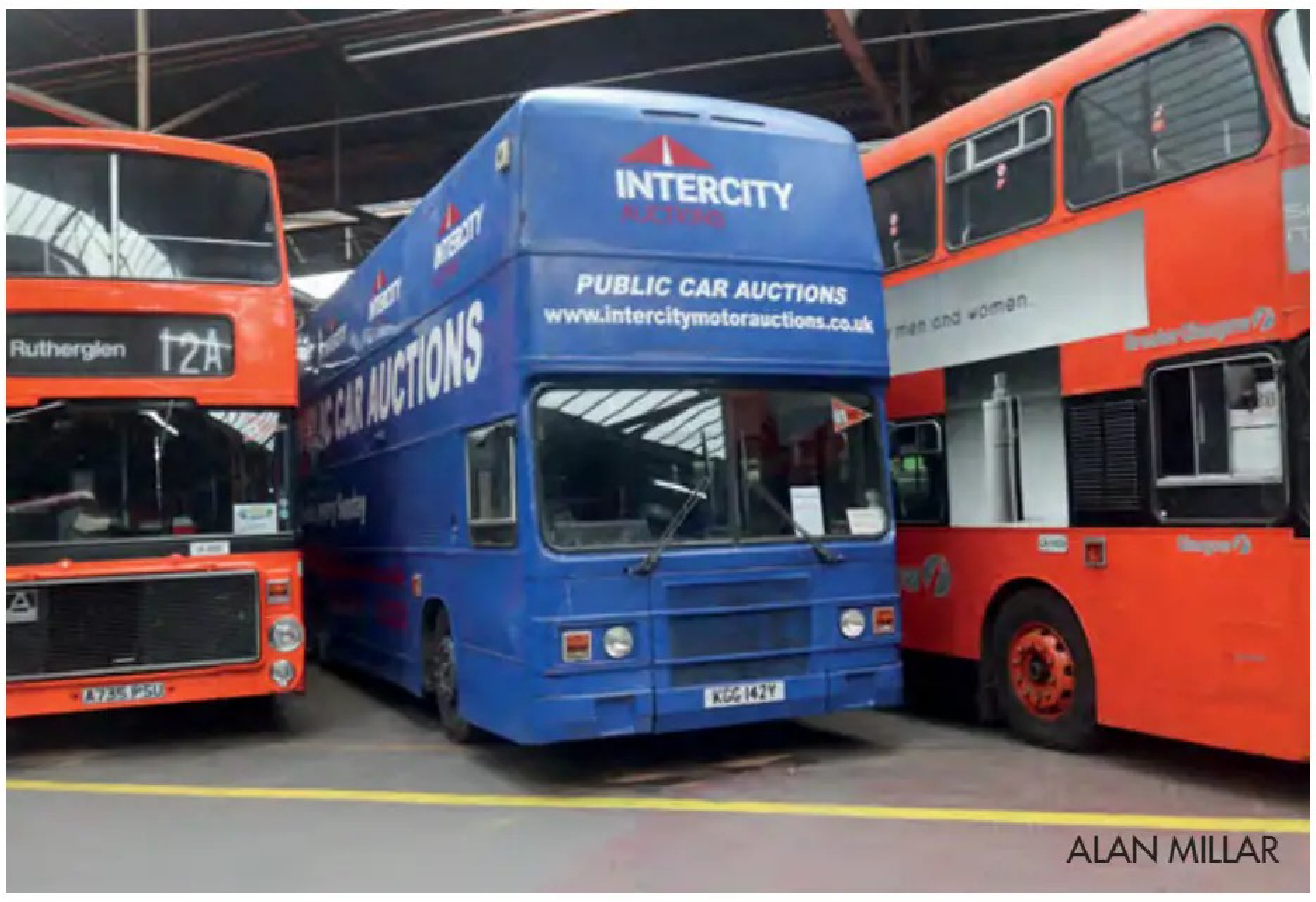
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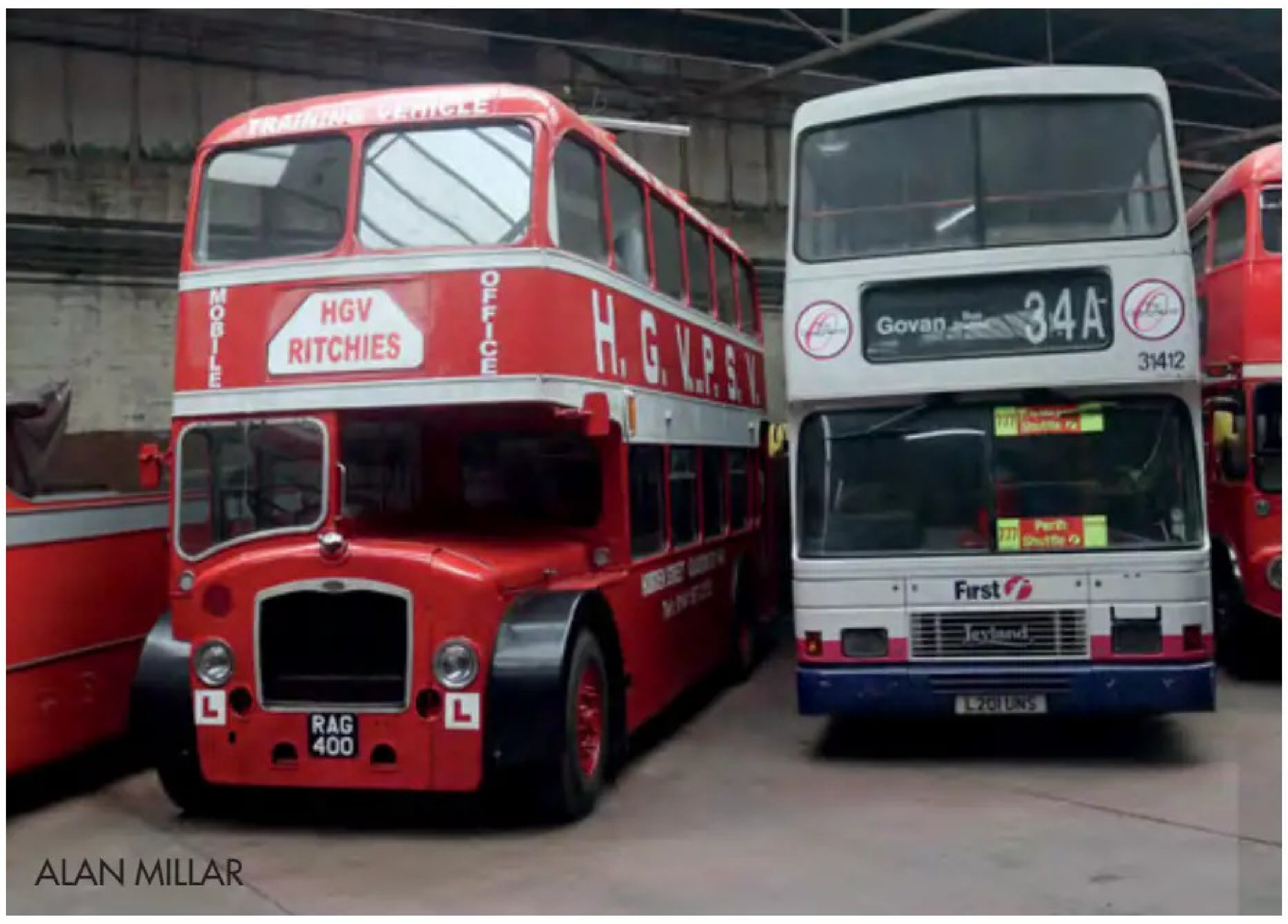

ALAN MILLAR

New arrivals at Bridgeton

Two recent arrivals at the Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust's Bridgeton Bus Garage — a Leyland Olympian and Bristol Lodekka — were on display at the annual open weekend on October 11/12.

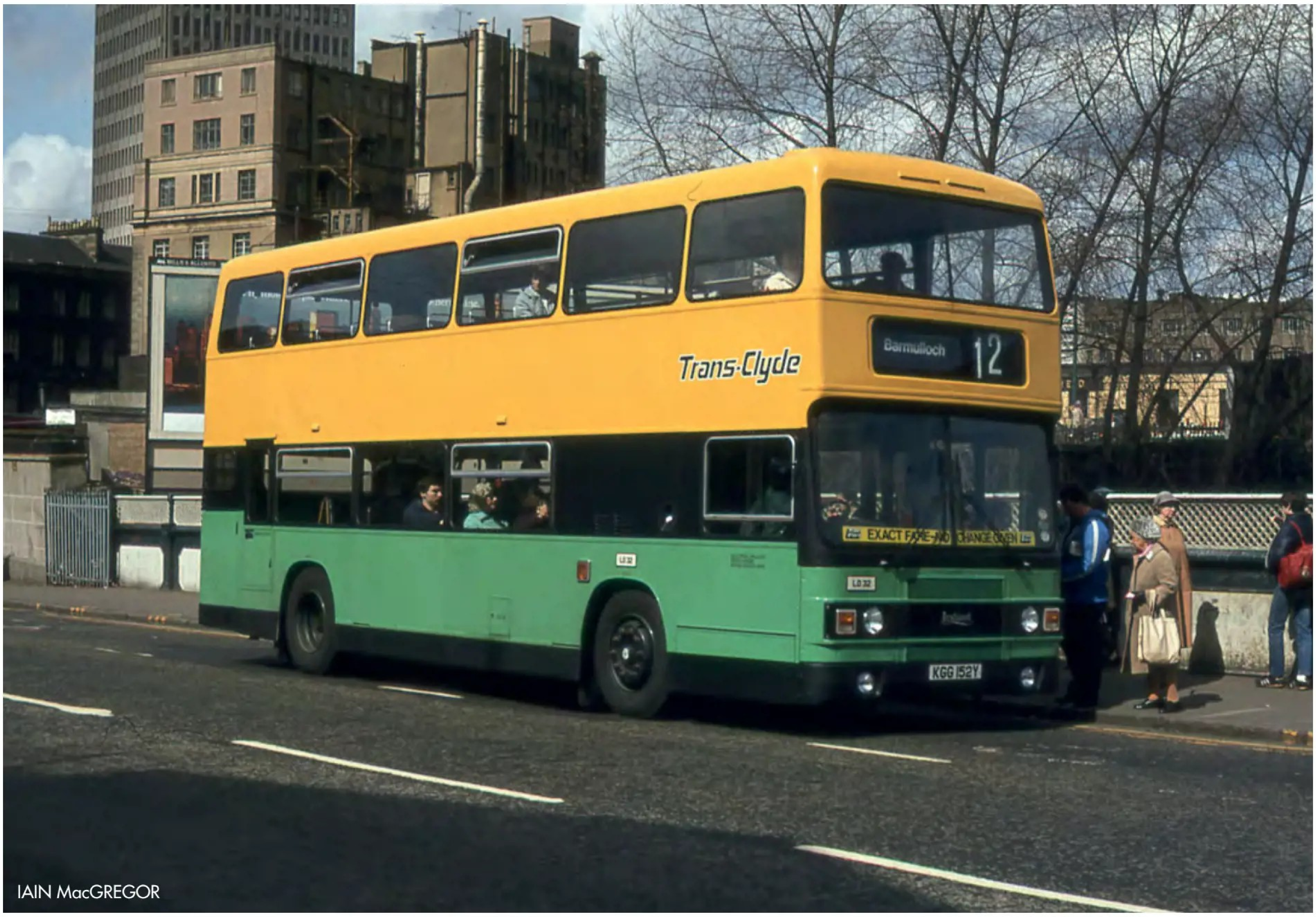
The Olympian is Eastern Coach Works-bodied KGG 142Y, new to Strathclyde PTE in February 1983 as its LO22 and the only survivor of 25 with the uncommon combination of Leyland TL11 engine and Voith gearbox. SPTE bought 46 Olympians, 30 of them with lowheight ECW bodies for routes it planned to operate in competition with the Scottish Bus Group (SBG).

LO22 was among the last vehicles delivered in a green, yellow and black livery with Trans-Clyde fleetnames, as in the April 1983 picture of similar LO32 (KGG 152Y).

It passed to the arm's length Strathclyde's Buses company in 1986 and remained in passenger service, latterly with First Glasgow, until 1999 when it became an ancillary vehicle converted in 2004 into a mobile computer games unit that toured schools. It was owned by Inter City Car Auction from 2008 to 2012 and after that was stored undercover until the GVVT acquired it in August and drew up ambitious plans for its long-term restoration.

The ECW-bodied Lodekka is former Western SMT DB1634 (RAG 400), an LD6G new in 1961 and acquired by Ritchie's Driver Training in Glasgow in the late 1970s for use as a training vehicle and mobile classroom. It is still owned by the Ritchie family and preserved in its training role. Another of the same batch of 20 vehicles, DB1645 (RAG 411), has been resident at Bridgeton since 2010, restored to Western livery.

These are among the last LD Lodekkas that Bristol built, as SBG switched to the flat-floor F-series in 1961, two years later than the state-owned operators in England and Wales.


IAIN MacGREGOR

Dutch collection secures Solo

OVCN, the Netherlands Public Transport Collection, has acquired a 15-year-old left-hand-drive Optare Solo for its fleet.

The 24-seat Solo M810L was one of 25 built in 2010 for Syntus, then a joint venture between Keolis and Dutch state-owned bus and railway operators Connexxion and NS, to operate in the Veluwe region east of Amsterdam. Syntus, now owned outright by Keolis, is an English language acronym for Synergy between Train and Bus. This bus, numbered 3306 latterly, was one of seven moved east from Veluwe to Twente, closer to the German border and one of five of those sold to PKS Kielce in Strawczyn, Poland — around halfway between Krakow and Warsaw — when Syntus withdrew its last Solos in 2021.

It retained its red Twents livery and branding and was advertised for sale last summer. OVCN intends to restore it to its original light blue Veluwe livery and fleetnumber 5306, filling a gap in its coverage of regional liveries and vehicle types. Its extensive collection also includes a 1959 Leyland Royal Tiger Worldmaster from Maarse & Kroon, a large family-owned business acquired by NS in 1971.

51 Almelo CS
Twents
syntus Twente
BX-VZ-82
DANIEL STAZICKER

Original Olympian skips into Skipton

The first production Leyland Olympian double-decker, ECW-bodied Ribble 2101 (GFR 101W) chassis ON1, was in action at the Yorkshire Dales running day in Skipton on October 12. It was one of five Olympians with W-suffix registrations and the only production vehicle with one. Its 77-seat ECW body was originally EX17 in a prototype series but was reclassified as a production body, one of 23 for Ribble whose 1980 prototype, 2100 (DBV 100W) chassis B45.02, also is in preservation.

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281
OXFAM
JOHN YOUNG

RALLY CALENDAR UPDATE

Full details of events in 2025 and early 2026 are in the Museum & Rally Guide published with April Buses. Back copies are available by mail order (see p98).

NOVEMBER

15 GLASGOW Twilight running day, Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust, Bridgeton Bus Garage, 14:00-19:00. Frequent free rides to/from city centre.

15 ENFIELD Transport Bazaar, 11:00-14:30, St Stephen's Church Hall, Village Road, EN1 2EY. Admission £3.
Transport links: Buses 329 and W8, London Overground Weaver line Bush Hill Park (10min walk along Park Avenue).
Contacts: The Enfield Transport Circle, https://tetc.chessck.co.uk.

16 ST HELENS Autumn Heritage Bus Running Day & Transport Fair, 10:00-16:00, North Western Museum of Road Transport.

22 NORTHAMPTON Transport Collectors Fair, 10:00-15:00, Roade Village Hall, Bailey Brooks Lane, Roade, NN7 2LS. Admission £2.50.

23 WALSALL Collectors' Fair, Aldridge Transport Museum, 10:00-15:00.
Transport links: free bus from/to Walsall.

23 LEYLAND, LANCS Christmas Craft and Gift Fair, British Commercial Vehicle Museum.

DECEMBER

6 MAIDSTONE Vintage Toy Fair, 09:00-14.30, Lockmeadow Car Park (outside under cover), Baker Street, ME16 8LW.

6/7 MANCHESTER Museum of Transport. Christmas Weekend. Running weekend with festive food, decorations, music and links to Christmas markets in Exchange Square.
Transport links: Heritage bus rides every 30min from/to Shudehill Interchange, 10:00-16:30.

6/7, 13/14 LOWESTOFT Ride the Lights, East Anglia Transport Museum, Carlton Colville, 15:00-19:00.

14 ROTHERHAM South Yorkshire Transport Museum open day Winter Wonderland, 10:30-16:00.

14 LEYLAND, LANCS Christmas Concert with Leyland Band, British Commercial Vehicle Museum.

14, 21 LONG HANBOROUGH Oxford Bus Museum Santa visit and free vintage bus rides 12:15, 14:15.

2026/27 Museum & Rally Guide

Our comprehensive guide to transport museums and bus events from March 2026 to spring 2027 will be published with April Buses. If you are organising rallies, running days, fairs, swapmeets and similar events, to be sure of being included in our free listings, please send the details of where and when to alan.millar@keypublishing.com by Monday February 2.

MUSEUM

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IN FLEET NEWS THIS MONTH

- Arriva Midlands orders new fleet for Shrewsbury upgrade
- CT4N sends BYD electric single-deckers for sale at auction
- The Harrogate Bus Company withdraws its Volvo electrics
- Rosso to buy Enviro200 MMCs to replace its Optare Versas
- Transport UK London to withdraw all its Caetano electrics

BODY TYPE

AB	Articulated single-deck bus
AC	Articulated coach
B	Rigid single-deck bus
C	Coach
DP	Dual purpose, usually coach seats in a bus shell
H	Double-decker
L	Lowbridge double-decker with side sunken gangway upstairs. All other double-deckers are H (highbridge) regardless of overall height.
M	Minibus
O	Permanent open-top
CO	Convertible open-top
PO	Partial open-top

SEATING CAPACITY

For double-deckers, this is shown with the upper deck capacity first (e.g. 43/30, indicating 43 'over' 30. Where the split is not known, a total figure (e.g. 73) is shown in the same style as for single-deckers. The total seating capacity shown includes all fixed and tip-up seats. The vehicles themselves may show other permutations of seats, standing spaces and wheelchair capacity.

DOOR POSITION

F	Front (can be directly behind front axle on vehicles with no front overhang)
R	Rear
RD	Rear with platform doors
C	Centre
D	Dual (two) doors
T	Triple doors

The letter 't' after the door position indicates the provision of a toilet, while 'L' after the door position shows that a wheelchair lift is fitted.

REGISTRATIONS

Registration numbers first issued from 1 September 2001 show a two-letter area identification code (e.g. BU for Birmingham, CU for Swansea, SX for Inverness), followed by a two-digit code indicating the period of first registration (e.g. 51 for September 2001 to February 2002, 02 for March to August 2002, 52 for September 2002 to February 2003, 03 for March to August 2003 and so on. These are followed by a three-letter identification of the vehicle itself. In 'Fleet News', a batch of vehicles with consecutively issued registrations will be shown in the following fashion: LS34-46 (GG51 PYS/T/V-Z, PZB-F/H). The letters I and Q are not used in these three-letter combinations.

Where a vehicle has been re-registered, its previous registration number(s) (where known) follow in italic type (e.g. RM48 (LDS 199A, *VLT 48*), with the most recent given first.

WHERE TO SEND REPORTS

English and Welsh reports (no photographs) should be sent to: John G. Lidstone, 76 Thames Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 2XD, marking your envelope 'Fleet News' (mail sent to the previous address in Shoeburyness will no longer be forwarded. Mail not marked 'Fleet News' may miss our publication deadline) E-mail text messages (no attachments or photographs, please) to: busesfleetnews@gmail.com
Twitter @John_Lidstone

MERMAID INN
Guisborough 81
arriva
arrivabus.co.uk/north-east
YJ10 DFP

Arriva North East has withdrawn the last of its 27 Turkish-built Temsa Avenues, with 4717 (YJ10 DFP), photographed in Guisborough in August 2022, among those sold for scrap. They were the only examples of the Cummins-engined model imported to the UK. JOHN YOUNG

1st Bus Stop, Gravesend
Acquired ex-Go-Ahead London in September were H39/24D-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 LX09 FBD/K.

Aintree Coachline, Maghull
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC double-decker JC75 ACL was new in October.

Al's, Birkenhead
Mercedes-Benz Tourismo HC18 ALS has passed to Challinor, Talke.

Aldermaston Coach Lines, Beenham
Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt BU75 WRL was new in September.

Alpine, Llandudno CTG
Scania K410CB6/Higer Touring AP75 ALP is new.

Volvo B9R/Plaxton Elite C51Ft SO12 WJD, Volvo B11R/Plaxton Panther C53Ft YX15 OVS (*JH60 COM*) and Volvo B11R/Sunsundegui SC7 C55Ft NG15 YOF/H (*JH15 BUS, COM*) were transferred from JH Coaches, Birtley in September, while C72F-seated VDL Futura FHD2-129.365 SO62 JZT (*570 PRR*) and Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther C53Ft YN06 OPK (*FSU 393*) came from Coatham, Boosbeck and Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther C70F RX57 GXS from Horseman, Reading; SO62 JZT has been re-registered HNZ 3909 and YN06 OPK has become IIL 3504.

Also acquired are Scania K360IB4/Plaxton Panther C70FL EU06 LEW (*PF61 OXF*), Scania K320IB4/Irizar i4 C70FL JFZ 7018 (*NUI 5273*) and Scania K320IB4/Irizar i4 C53FL JFZ 7031 (*WWW 883, A16 EBD, A17 EBD*) ex-REL Redwing, Croydon and tri-axle Volvo B12B/Jonckheere JSV C53FL FX58 SXD (*FH58 JVM, XJZ 222, 09 D 2777*) ex-Ward Recycling, Old Whittington.

Scania K360EB4/Plaxton Panther EU06 LEW has been re-registered MJZ 6729.

Volvo B12M/Plaxton Panther Y928 UOL (*MBX 447, R70 JCS, Y928 UOL, A4 FTG*) and NH04 LCH (*AEZ 3801, NH04 LCH, GT04 ZZZ*) have passed to Lewis-y-Llan, Amlwch, Bova Futura FHD127.365 YJ11 ANR to Creigiau Travel, Cardiff.

Phil Anslow & Sons, Varteg Hill
EVM B19F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519CDi RX75 NYF/G are new for Monmouth town services.

Volvo B9R/Caetano Levante PA62 BUS has reverted to original registration PO62 LNA.

Arriva London AA
Into service are 10.9m H42/19D-seated BYD BD11 ED11-6, 20/1, 36-8, 43/5-8, 50/1/3 (LF25 TJO/U/V/X-Z, TKE/O/J/K/U, TLJ/N/O/U/V/Y/Z, TMU) at Palmers Green in September (ED11, 20) and October and 10.6m H40/20D-seated Wright StreetDeck Electroliner ES86 (LY24 FXO) at Tottenham in September, followed in October by ES93, 114/40/59 (LY24 JOU, JTZ, LV74 CEJ/N) at Tottenham and ES141 (LV74 CEK) at Palmers Green. ES114 carries a Royal British Legion poppy appeal wrap. All the batch ED1-21 (LF25 TFU/V/X, THK/N/U/V/X/Z, TKN, TJO/U/X-Z, TKA/C-E/O) is in service.

Withdrawn are Wright Gemini 2DL DW202/12/8/45/6 (LJ09 SUO, SSO, STZ, LJ59 AAE/K), Alexander Dennis Enviro200

Bluewater Bus Station
DARENTH VALLEY HOSPITAL
AUTO CAR
ACZ 690

With a change of ownership Autocar Bus & Coach Services has acquired ten of Go-Ahead London's Wright StreetLite DFs for its services in north Kent and has introduced this new purple livery. ACZ 690, photographed at New Ash Green, was WS12 (LJ13 GJX) in London. RICHARD GODFREY

ENL5, 55 (LJ07 EDC, LJ10 CSV), ENX8, 13, 27 (LJ61 CHZ, LJ12 BXY, GN09 AWF), Volvo B5LH/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 HV56 (LJ62 BNU), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 T140/1 (LJ10 HUZ, HTT) and T207/8/10/2/8/21/4-6/31-6/42-5/7/8/50/1/9/60 (LJ61 CHN/O/X, CGG/Y, CFM/P/U/V, LLC-G/K, LKN-P/U/X/Y, LLA, LJY, LKK/L).

Shelton Motors, Ramsey (dealer) has taken Wright Gemini 2DL DW227/37/46 (LJ59 AEW/G, AAK), 431/41 (LJ11 ADX, ACF), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 ENX6-9, 11-3/8, 27 (LJ61 CKO, CHY/Z, LJ12 BYS/U/V/Y, BYD), Volvo B5LH/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 HV11/3-5, 32/4, 63, 76 (LJ60 AXC/F, AWF, LJ11 EFY, EGC, LJ62 BZY, BWP), prototype Wright New Routemaster LT7 (LTZ 1007), Wright StreetLite DF SLS26/9/30 (SK17 HJN/O/U/V), Wright StreetDeck SW1 (LK64 DVV), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 T4, 5 (LJ08 CVV/W), T152/9 (LJ60 AVZ/G) and T233/5/44/50 (LJ61 LLE/G, LKP, LLA).

Stafford Bus Centre, Stone (dealer) took Gemini 2DL DW245 (LJ59 AAF), South East Bus Supplies, Orpington (dealer) took Enviro200 ENX16 (LJ12 BYB) and Enviro400s T207/8/12/34 (LJ61 CHN/O, CGG, LLF), while Buy A Bus, Copthorne (dealer) took T221/6/32/43 (LJ61 CFM/V, CLD, LKO).

Wright Gemini 2DL DW212/8 (LJ09 SSO, STZ) passed to DM Motor Services, Tockwith and T210/36/42/8/59 (LJ61 CHX, LLG, LKN/Y/K) to Metafora Transport, Trinidad & Tobago, whilseT224/31 (LJ61 CFP, LLC) have also left the fleet.

Arriva Midlands AA

Fifteen new diesel single-deckers, believed to be Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs, are expected in December, to enter service in Shrewsbury in January.

Recently acquired Optare Versa V1170 YJ65 EVM/N are numbered 2988/9 respectively and are based at Shrewsbury. repainted in sky-blue fleet livery.

Transferred in from Arriva the Shires are C53Ft-seated Temsa Safari HD 7100/1/5 (YJ69 AAO/U/Z), while B42F-seated Temsa Avenue YJ10 DHC, DFU/V have come from Arriva North East.

As reported last month under that heading, Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV seed vehicle DM01 (AR74 ZEB) has moved on to Arriva North East.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 2151 (CX08 DJJ), Wright StreetLite WF 2313 (LM64 JNZ) and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 4569 (YX72 OEN) have been transferred to Arriva the Shires.

Scania CN230UB OmniCity 3554 (YR58 SRV) has gone for scrap.

Arriva North East AA

Something of an oddity here, Arriva the Shires Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban B45F 3905 (FJ58 HYO) has been transferred in but has not been used.

Withdrawals have eliminated three vehicle types here, the Temsa Avenue, original style Optare Solo and Alexander Dennis Enviro300. The last Avenues were 4701/2/9/13/8/9/21/3/4 (YJ59 BHO/P, YJ10 DHC/G, DFU/V, DTF, YJ11 GHB/D), the final four dispensed with through frequency reductions introduced from November 2, though 4709/18/9 have been transferred to Arriva Midlands. The last original style Solos were M810SL 2601-3 (YJ61 JFF/G/K) and M950 2841 (YJ08 XBY), with 2601-3 transferred to Arriva North West & Wales (2601/3 were branded for Northumberland Line service 434). The sole remaining Enviro300 was 1357 (CX58 EWA).

Also is also withdrawn were accident damaged VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 1405 (NK09 BPO) and Whitby park-&-ride liveried Wright Gemini 2SL integrals 7609/10 (NK59 DMO/U).

Temsa Avenue 4703/6/7/10/7/25 (YJ59 BHU/X/Y, YJ10 DHE, DFP, YJ11 GHF) and VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 2 1450 (NK10 CFP) have left the fleet, with 4706/17/25 passing to Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) for scrap.

Arriva North West & Wales AA

The first new buses since January 2023, B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 2159-61 (YY75 DWK-M) arrived at Bangor depot in October for services G8 (Bethesda) and G9 (Maesgeirchen).

B23F-seated Optare Solo M810SL YJ61 JFF/G/K have been transferred from Arriva North East.

The five former National Express West Midlands Wright StreetDeck have been numbered 4700-4 (SM65 WNC, SL16 YPM-P) in a series previously allocated to Mercedes-Benz Sprinter/Mellor Strata minibuses. They will be allocated to Liverpool Green Lane depot following repaint at Bus & Coach World, Blackburn.

The last of the Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC transferred from Arriva the Shires to be recorded are 2797, 2800 (YX17 NMV, NNA).

Blue and green eco livery has been applied to Volvo B5LH/Wright Gemini 3 hybrids 4801/8/23/5/6/8/30/45 (BT66 MTF/Y, BW66 GYN/P/R/T/V, BP66 VKX), while VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 2 3214/5 (YJ62 JNO/U) have received sky-blue fleet livery.

Withdrawn are VDL SB120/Wright Cadet 2630 (CX07 CPZ) and VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 2985 (MX59 JYZ), while VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 2659/63 (CX07 CUW, CX58 EUD) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 2160 (LJ07 EDO) have been sold for scrap. Only two VDL SB120/Wright Cadet remain operational, 2639/40 (CX07 CSU/V) allocated to Bangor but used regularly at Llandudno outstation.

Arriva the Shires AA

B38F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 2151 (CX08 DJJ), B30F-seated Wright StreetLite WF 2313 (LM64 JNZ) and H43/30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 4569 (YX72 OEN) have been transferred from Arriva Midlands.

Making the opposite move were Temsa Safari HD 7100/1/5 (YJ69 AAO/U/Z).

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 3905 (FJ58 HYO) has gone to Arriva North East.

Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) has taken Volvo B9TL/East Lancs Olympus 4113 (YJ08 EET) for scrap.

Arriva Yorkshire AA

Withdrawn are Alexander Dennis Enviro200 1050/2 (YJ09 CSU, CTX), Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1112 (YJ08 DVU), VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 1424/9/32 (CX58 EWG/P/T) and accident damaged Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 1955 (YX17 NFY, with 1429 sold to Wigley, Carlton (dealer) for scrap.

Also sold for scrap are Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1105 (YJ08 DVH) and VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 1439 (MX59 JYZ) to Hardwick, Carlton (dealer), VDL SB200/Wright Pulsar 2 1444(NK10 CEN) and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 1884 (SN58 ENY) to Wigley, Carlton (dealer), and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 1047/66 (YX10 EBP, YJ09 CVE) to unidentified breakers.

Ashbourne Community Transport, Derbyshire

Plain-white EVM-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi RX75 OEE was new in September for services 110/111.

Ashcroft, Speke

C53Flt-seated Yutong GT12 integral AT75 ASH was new in September.

Ashley Travel, Renishaw, Derbyshire

C57Ft-seated Irizar i6S Efficient AS75 LEY was new in September.

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

Atkinson, Ingleby Arncliffe, N Yorks
C55FLt-seated Neoplan N2216SHD Tourliner OY75 ZWH was new in September.

Autocar, Ryarsh, Kent
Further to last month's report, the PSV Circle advises that this business is now in common ownership with Brookline, Ryarsh and Farleigh Coaches, Hoo and the Autocar operating centre has moved from Five Oak Green to B3 The Street, Ryarsh. The B31D-seated Wright StreetLite DF acquired ex-Go-Ahead London and painted in a new purple livery are LJ13 GJV/X-Z, GKA/C-G, of which LJ13 GJV/X-Z, GKA/C/E/F have been re-registered ACZ 590, 690, 790, 560, 490, 667/77, 470 respectively. ACZ 590 (*LJ13 GJV*) has been transferred to the Brookline fleet.

Wealden PSV, Five Oak Green (dealer) has taken Gardner 6HLXCT-engined Leyland Tiger/Plaxton Paramount WIB 1118 (*A182 UGB*), Leyland Titan B125 WUV, Leyland Tiger/Alexander (Belfast) N-type E31/2 UNE, Volvo B10M-50 Citybus/Alexander RV F211/2/4 WRU, Dennis Dart SLF/Wright Crusader J222 BUS (*658 COP*), P110 CCT (*P111 CAP, 96 G 7917, P111 CAP*), Dennis Dart/East Lancs EL2000 L505 CPJ, Dennis Dart/Plaxton Pointer P524 XBB (*207 RKL, P524 XBB, XS 2210, P524 XBB*), Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Mini Pointer V308 MDP, Scania N113DRB/East Lancs Cityzen W677 PTD, DAF DB250/East Lancs Myllennium Lowlander PG53 YCT (*GMN 616E*) and MAN 14.220/MCV Evolution AE57 DZK.

Belle, Lowestoft
Scania K360CB4/Irizar i6 C53F BC75 BEL was new in September.

Belle Vue, Heaton Chapel
Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519CDi/Mellor Strata B21F 741/2 (WX75 OBR/S) entered service in early October. They replaced Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 725/6 (SK24 CTY, CUA), which have left the fleet, with 725 passing to Gateshead Central Taxis and 726 to Globe, Barnsley.

Berwyn, Trefor
B22F-seated Optare Solo M7900SE YJ66 AOC has been acquired, ex-ARG Travel, Bellshill.

Tri-axle Volvo B11R/Caetano Levante BV66 WPP has been re-registered S18 CBC.

Volvo B12B/Caetano Levante FJ56 PBO has passed to Dilwyn's, Caernarfon.

Bibby, Ingleton, North Yorks
C53FLt-seated Temsa HD12 integral YD75 WNZ was new in September.

The Blackburn Bus Company TD
Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renown training vehicle T997 (T77 TDV, *YC51 LXY*) has been withdrawn.

Similar 1063/92 (X573 YUG, *B10 YKT, X573 YUG*; PO51 MUU, *B10 YKW, PO51 MUU*), 1100-3 (PN02 HVW, *B10 YKR, PN02 HVW*; PN02 HWA, HVJ/K) have passed to PVS, Carlton (dealer).

BorderBus, Beccles
New Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa 116 (BB75 BUS), reported last month, is seated B46F.

Former Stagecoach Manchester H45/31F-seated Scania N230UD OmniCity YT59 DXY, RYM have been acquired and numbered 219/20 respectively.

Bringing back memories of the orange buses that dominated Greater Manchester from the 1970s to late 1990s, The Burnley Bus Company 2778 (BF63 HDA) is one of two Wright Eclipse Gemini 2-bodied Volvo B9TLs transferred from The Keighley Bus Company in September. PHIL HOWARD

Brighton & Hove GA
Transferred from Go-Ahead London is PO41/24D-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 594 (SN06 BNZ).

Tri-axle Volvo B11R/Caetano Levante III 516 (BV69 KPJ) has been repainted in two-tone green Spirit of Sussex livery, as has Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 439 (BF12 KXS), which has been fitted with seatbelts and renumbered 555. Similar B9TL 430 (BF12 KXJ) is another transferred to Metrobus.

Loaned Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 897/8 (YX72 OLM/N) and Volvo B8R/Plaxton Leopard 899 (YX74 LTZ) have been returned to Mistral, Knutsford (dealer).

British Blue, Tranmere, Birkenhead
Scania K410EB6/Irizar i6 C53Ft acquired are YT19 EFF/L, ex-City Circle, Hayes and Newbridge respectively, subsequently re-registered K21/2 BBT in that order.

AT Brown of Telford FG
Transferred from Lakeside Coaches are Volvo B11R/Plaxton Panther C53FL 20936 (IGZ 6129), which has been re-registered K70 ATB, and Volvo B11R/Jonckheere C74FL 20989 (BV17 CVF).

The Burnley Bus Company TD
Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 DPH39/28F 2777/8 (BF63 HCY, HDA) were transferred from The Keighley Bus Company in September and painted in orange fleet livery.

Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2750/60 (PJ05 ZVW, ZWG) have passed to PVS, Carlton (dealer).

Caelloi, Pwllheli
Scania K410CB6/Higer Touring C57FLt YN75 VLP was new in October and has been re-registered Y99 THJ.

Cardiff Bus
Twenty Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa single-deckers are expected for early in the new year for services 92/93/94/95. They will replace Alexander Dennis Enviro200s and wear three different liveries, pink front/orange rear for services 92/93/94, grey front/orange rear for service 95 and others with orange front/red rear.

Two-tone orange fleet livery has been applied to Mercedes-Benz Citaro 130 (CN65 ACO).

Carlone, Wraysbury, Surrey
New in September were Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi/EVM Cityline B16F RX75 NXR/T/W in livery of white front and purple rear with branding for services 442/X442 (Staines-Heathrow).

Wright StreetLite WF SN64 CUJ and Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D/Plaxton Cheetah BNZ 118 (*YN60 FMY, SL60 PUL, YN60 FMY, V20 BAY, YN60 FMY*) have left the fleet.

Carmel Travel, Caernarfon
Scania K360IB4/Irizar i6 YN16 WTY has been acquired, ex-Lloyd, Machynlleth.

Carousel Buses GA
New Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC for Maidenhead area services are 8.9m B30F-seated 80525-30 (YX75 KWS-W/Y) and 11.6m B43F-seated 80455-7 (YX75 KWO-R); 80525-8 are in two-tone purple Borough Bus livery, while the others are two-tone red.

Celtic Travel, Llanidloes
Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B38F BU75 WPP was new in September, followed by Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi/Apex C22F YD75 WNY in October.

Tri-axle Volvo B11R/Caetano Levante C56FLt BU18 OSY/Z have been acquired, ex-Woods Coaches.

Volvo B9R/Caetano Levante FJ13 EBV, ECD have passed to Bus & Coach Centre, Forest Hill (dealer).

Centrebus CB
Transferred from Chaserider in September were B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 540/1 (YX22 OGG/H) and B39F-seated Enviro200 592 (YY64 GWK), while B37F-seated Enviro200 510 (YX60 DXR) has come from High Peak Buses for use at Leicester.

Chalfont, Southall
Scania K410CB6/Caetano Levante IIIA C55FLt BV75 GKE/F were new in September.

Chaserider, Cannock CB
Transferred to Centrebus in September were Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 540/1 (YX22 OGG/H) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 592 (YY64 GWK).

83 Cross Keys Lakeside
Ensignbus
Ensignbus
KIG 1264

Ensignbus 156 (KIG 1264), an Alexander Dennis ALX400-bodied Volvo B7TL new to Dublin Bus as its AX560, is one of six double-deckers acquired with the contracts business of Orsett-based Keane Travel. It was photographed at Lakeside on a registered bus service. MARK LYONS

Chaseside, Copthorne, West Sussex
Acquired via South East Bus Supplies (dealer) are B37F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 GX57 BXG ex-Metrobus, re-registered V777 CSP and numbered 103, and H41/24D-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 LJ08 CVF, LJ61 CHO ex-Arriva London, numbered 205/6 respectively. Correcting last month's report, Enviro200 102 (Y77 CSP) was previously registered YX59 BYJ, not LJ59.

City Transport, Newcastle upon Tyne
Acquired are MAN 18.220/Alexander Dennis ALX300 B42F NK55 AHZ from Stagecoach North east, Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H48/33F SN55 BPO from A&A Coach Travel, Leeds and Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 H39/23D 5901 (BK10 MFZ) from Stagecoach London.

Clynnog & Trefor, Trefor
New are C53Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2 BV75 HRU and Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519CDi/Ilesbus C19F BN75 MVX.

Acquired are Volvo B11R/Jonckheere JHV C53Ft BV17 CVE, ex-P&J Ellis, Perivale and Scania K320IB4/MOBIpeople Explorer C74DL YN71 ZTF (*CC71 BGC*), ex-Carver, Little Sutton. The Volvo was quickly re-registered Y17 KBC.

Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D/Plaxton Cheetah ESU 990 has reverted to original registration YN08 DNO, allowing Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BA19 OWV to become ESU 990.

Sold are Neoplan Starliner OU15 ZVZ to Go Goodwins, (Clwyd), Mostyn and Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D/Plaxton Cheetah SF57 JSU to Pat's Coaches, Wrexham.

Coastliner, Blackpool
Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa 1308 (BD74 FKE) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 1329 (YX21 RVK) carry a new blue On the Wyre livery for Bus Service Improvement Plan-funded service 24 (Fleetwood-Blackpool).

Coatham, Boosbeck, N Yorks CTG
VDL Futura FHD2 SO62 JZT (*570 PRR*) and Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther YN06 OPK (*FSU 393*) have been transferred to Alpine, Llandudno.

Compass Royston GA
VDL Futura FHD2-139 22043 (WD14 ZWR, *Y20 DLC, WD14 ZWR, C111 EFS*) has been transferred to Procters Coaches.

Connexions Buses, Tockwith, N Yorks
H45/23F-seated Scania N94UD OmniCity S40 GHH (*SK06 AHN*), new to Lothian Buses, was acquired from Gemsar Travel, Heywood in July.

Scania L94UB/Wright Solar FJ55 BZT, new to Trent Barton, has been sold for preservation.

Crosskeys, Folkestone
B40F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YW25 DFN was new in August.

CT4N, Nottingham
Nottingham City Council-owned BYD K9UR electric single-deckers 977-9/81/2/4/4/7/8 (LJ16 NMK/M/O/V/X/Z, NNA/C/E) passed to Fleet Auction Group, Loughborough (dealer) in September.

Cumbria Coaches, Carlisle
C53Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BV75 HSZ was new in September.

D&G Bus CB
B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX19 ONM has been acquired for use at Crewe, ex-Go North East and numbered 5021; it is white with D&G Bus fleetnames.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 593 (YY64 GWL) has returned from High Peak Buses.

Dews, Somersham, Cambs
New in September was Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519CDi/Ilesbus BN75 WDD. Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa BU75 WPO (Fleet News last month) is in a grey livery with branding for service AW1 (Alconbury Weald-Huntingdon).

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban B42F BX56 XCG (*L25 BUS, BX56 XCG*) has been acquired ex-Burrows, Child Okeford. It was new to National Express West Midlands.

Diamond Midlands RO
Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 30508 (FJ57 CYV) has been withdrawn.

Diamond North West RO
Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 20639/40 (YY74 URV/W) have been transferred back to Preston Bus.

Withdrawn are Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Mellor Strata 21238 (LL69 PXK) and Mercedes-Benz Citaro 33043 (BF60 OEV), while Dennis Dart SLF/Plaxton Pointer training vehicle 1010 (PJ02 RHA) has passed to Ripley, Carlton (dealer).

Dilwyn's, Caernarfon
Volvo B12B/Caetano Levante FJ56 PBO has been acquired, ex-Berwyn, Trefor.

East Yorkshire GA
Transferred from Procters Coaches are Volvo B9R/Caetano Levante C70FL 20075 (OSU 386, *YY63 OEJ*), Volvo B12B/Caetano Levante C70FL 20076 (9743 HP, *YX07 HJD, A15 EYC, YX07 HJD*), Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 515CDi/Mellor Strata B27F 20500 (WP24 SUF) and B29F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 20523 (SN16 OVS).

Eavesway, Ashton-in-Makerfield
C40Ft-seated Van Hool T17 Astron EV75 WAY was new in October.

George Edwards & Son, Bwlchgwyn, Wrexham
C49FLt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BT66 UAB (*171 D 51762*) has been acquired, ex-Llew Jones, Llanrwst.

Edwards, Llantrisant
Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi/Ilesbus B20F WX75 OFS was new in September, followed in October by Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX75 KUB-H and Iveco Daily 70C21/Ilesbus Glance C33FL RX75 XEH.

On loan have been MCV B31F-bodied Volvo BZL demonstrator BV72 KPF and, from Daimler Buses, Coventry (dealer), C61FLt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo L BT25 VWD.

Ellison, St Helens
New in September were C55Ft-seated Neoplan Tourliner OU75 VHF/G, Yutong TC9 midicoach YK75 LGW and Van Hool TDX21 Altano inter-deck YD75 UOE/F of which YD75 UOE is seated CH29Ft.

Ensignbus FG
Joining the fleet with the acquisition of the contract operations of Keane Travel, Orsett in August were Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs H45/33F GRZ 1260 (*BV55 UCX, D6 WMS, BV55 UCX*), similar H51/36F-seated RRZ 1265 (*YN05 WFT*), Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H44/30F KIG 1261 (*SN55 BPE*), Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H48/32F KIG 1262 (*SN57 DFK*) and Volvo B7TL/Alexander Dennis ALX400 H49/27F KIG 1263/4 (*06 D 30556/60*). KIG 1264 is numbered 156.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 132 (YX66 WLH) passed to CES Mayflower, Southampton in September.

Evans, Tregaron
Acquired are B36F-seated Optare Metrocity V1010MC YJ16 DYV, ex-Adventure Travel, via Stafford Bus Centre, Stone (dealer), B27F-seated Optare Solo M780SE YD63 UZF, ex-Taf Valley, Whitland and Mercedes-Benz Vario O813D/Plaxton Beaver 3 B28FL YN57 PZF, ex-Beck, Cleland.

Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D/Plaxton Cheetah YN10 FZJ has been exported to Ireland.

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

Faresaver, Chippenham

B33F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 YX18 KUO was acquired ex-Elizabeth Yule, Pitlochry in September.

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 BJ11 EAC, EBM have passed to Z&S, Aylesbury.

First Bus Beeline FG

Wright StreetLite Max 63301 (SN65 OLC) has been painted into First Bus livery.

First Bus Cymru FG

Wright StreetLite DF 47571 (SN64 CMU) is another transferred to First Bus West of England.

First Bus Eastern Counties FG

Twenty-four more electric double-deckers are expected in autumn next year, 14 for Norwich and ten for Great Yarmouth.

Transferred in are Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 PO39/23D 37796 (LK59 CXO) from First Bus South West and B37F-seated Wright StreetLite DF 47645/7 (SN15 AFE/J) from First Bus Essex.

Wright StreetDeck 35149 (SN65 OMT) has been converted to electric drive, re-registered MIG 6096, renumbered 71036 and transferred to First Bus Glasgow.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33805/11 (YX63LJK/Y) were transferred to First Bus Essex in August.

Withdrawn are Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 37142 (SN57 HDC) and Wright StreetLite DF 47679 (SL15 RVW).

Wigley, Carlton (dealer) has taken Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 36198 (BN12 WNY), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 44453 (YX09 HKN) and 44599 (YX08 HJF) for scrap.

First Bus Essex FG

Expanding last month's report, H43/27F-seated Yutong U11DD double-deckers 30103/5/7-16/9/21-26 (YK75 LLC/F/J/M-P/R/T-W, LME/J/L-O/U/V) and B39F-seated Yutong E12 single-deckers 65140-8/50-3/5-63/5-70 (YK75 LHZ, LJA/C/E/F/J/L/N/O/V/X-Z, LKC-G/J/L-N/P/U/V/X-Z) were delivered by October.

H41/26F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33805/11 (YX63LJK/Y) were transferred from First Bus Eastern Counties in August.

Wright StreetLite DF 47645/7 (SN15 AFE/J) have been transferred to First Bus Eastern Counties.

The PSV Circle reports the withdrawal of Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33504/51/2 (LK08 FLX, SN58 CFX/Y), 33674, 33705 (SN12 AEV, AHO), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 33995 (SN65 OGL) and Wright StreetLite DF 47665 (SN15 ACF).

PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 37037/54 (YJ06 XLC, XME).

First Bus London FG

BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV City BDE47041 (LV71 DVO) and BDE47177 (LD72 UGP) carry Royal British Legion poppy appeal wraps.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 ADE40413 (YX12 FNU) has been withdrawn, Alexander Dennis Enviro200 DLE30025 (SN60 ECV) has passed to Horseferry Coaches, London SW6 and short Enviro200s SDE20241-5/82-4 (YY64 TXB-F, YX14 RYU-W), on loan to Transport UK London since May, have been sold there.

The first Rightec RB6 electric minibuses, including 2201 (LX75 APF) photographed at Bluewater shopping centre, have gone into service with Go-Coach Hire on CrossBus routes. These Chinese-made King Long products are imported, supported and branded by a division of Wrightbus. RICHARD GODFREY

First Bus Manchester FG

A batch of new Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa single-deckers started to arrive around the start of November.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 69562 (BG13 VUE) has received First Bus fleet livery.

First Bus Midlands West FG

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 44618 (YX14 RVM) has been transferred to First Bus West of England.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban training vehicle 66845 (MX05 CGU) has left the fleet.

First Bus Potteries FG

Wright StreetDeck 35666/78/9 (MF22 SXU, SYO/P), en route from First Bus West of England to First Bus South Yorkshire, were used for a few days in early September before being repainted here into First Bus livery.

First Bus South West FG

Expanding last month's report, B42F-seated Wright GB Kite Electroliners are 63698-706 (BN75 NWF-H/J-M/O/P), while unregistered 63737-40, in Cornwall Council's lilac and aquamarine Park for Truro livery, were observed at the Wrightbus factory in Ballymena on October 18.

Transferred out are Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 37328/38/9 (WX57 HKJ/W/Y) to First Bus West of England and open-top Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 37796 (LK59 CXO) was transferred to First Bus Eastern Counties.

Wigley, Carlton (dealer) has taken Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 32549 (SF54 OSM) and 37002 (WX55 VHL), while 37008 (WX55 VHT) has gone to a buyer in the Bristol area.

First Bus South Yorkshire FG

H45/26F-seated Wright StreetDeck 35666/8/78/9/81 (MF22 SXU/W, SYO/P/S) have been transferred from First Bus West of England.

Braunstone Bus-liveried Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 69438/41 (WX59 BYP/T) are being converted to training vehicles.

Withdrawn are Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 37103/12/6 (YK07 AYA/L/P), 37265 (YN07 MLU) and 37494/6 (YN58 ERX, YN08 PLU); 37494 carried two-tone green and cream Peak Link livery and has passed to PVS, Carlton (dealer) along with similar 37108/16/7 (YK07 AYF/P/S) and Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 69349 (YJ08 CFD).

First Bus West of England FG

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H45/29F 37328/38/9 (WX57 HKJ/W/Y) have been transferred from First Bus South West, while B39F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 44618 (YX14 RVM) has come from First Bus Midlands West and B37F-seated Wright StreetLite DF 47571 (SN64 CMU) from First Bus Cymru.

Transferred out are Wright StreetDeck 35666/78/9 (MF22 SXU, SYO/P) to First Bus Potteries, 35668/81 (MF22 SXW, SYS) to First Bus South Yorkshire, Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 37097 (YJ08 GWN) and Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 69453/4 (WX59 BZG/H) to First Bus West Yorkshire.

PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken the cannibalised remains of Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 69452 (WX59 BZF) for scrap.

First Bus West Yorkshire FG

Transferred in from First Bus West of England are Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H45/29F 37097 (YJ08 GWN) and Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 B44F 69453/4 (WX59 BZG/H).

Repowered electric Wright StreetDecks 71028/30 (XIG 1728/30, *SL16 PZZ, REU*) were loaned to First Bus York from July/August until September.

Withdrawn are Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 37298/9 (MX07 BUF/H), 37507 (YN08 PNJ), BMC Condor 220 68706/7 (YJ57 WKC/B), Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 69300/8/21/3/9/46 (YJ08 GWY, YJ09 FWC/R/T, YJ08 CDE, CEX) and 69414/7 (YJ09 FXB/E).

PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 69307 (YJ09 FWB) for scrap.

First Bus York FG

H45/28F-seated repowered electric Wright StreetDecks 71028/30 (XIG 1728/30, *SL16 PZZ, REU*) were on loan from First Bus West Yorkshire from July/August until September.

Fourways, Guiseley GA

Temsa HD12 coach 24017 (YJ19 AXA) has been re-registered X14 WAY, while tri-axle Volvo B12B/Jonckheere 24001 (X14 WAY) has reverted to original registration FJ57 CYY.

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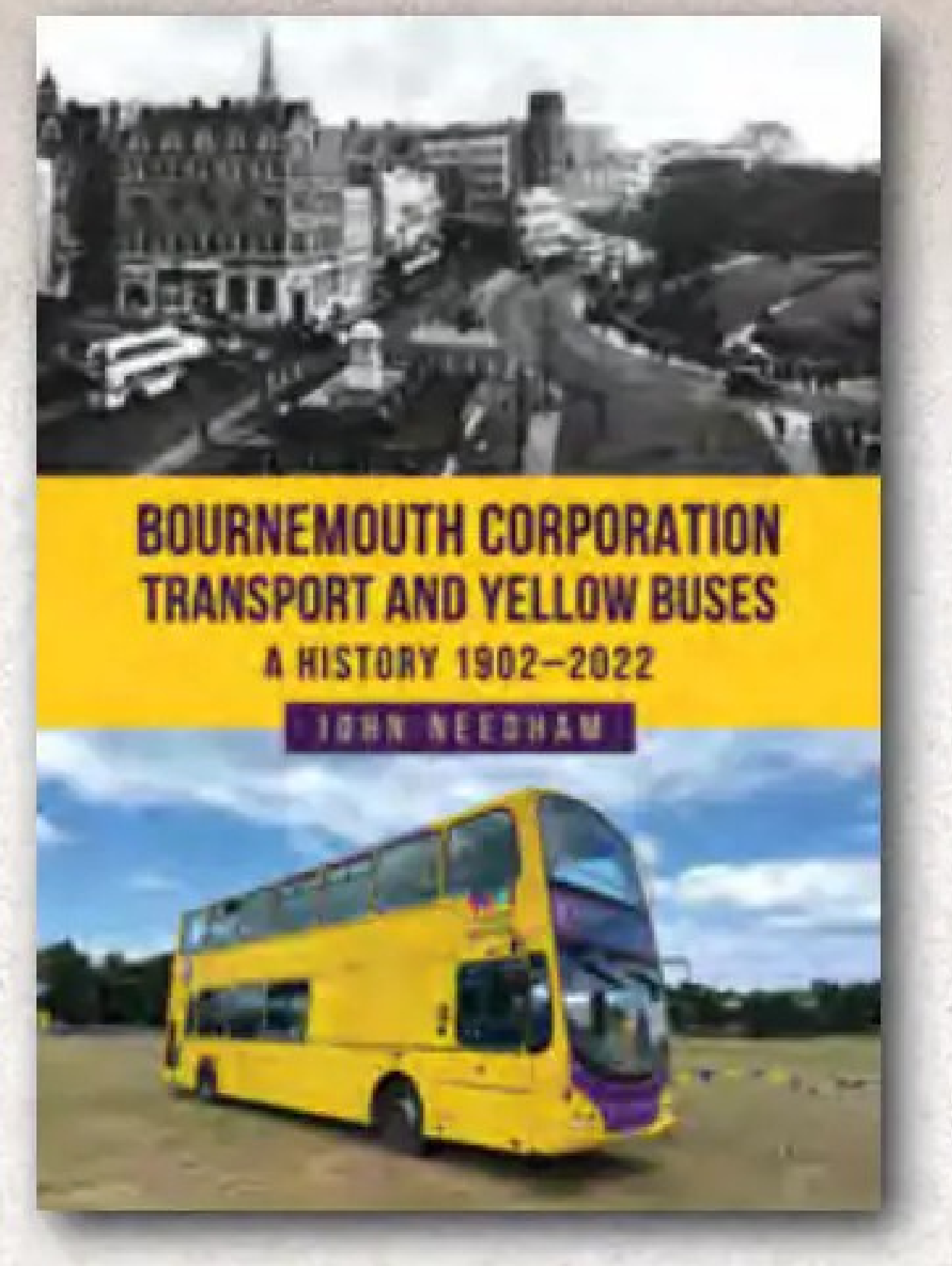

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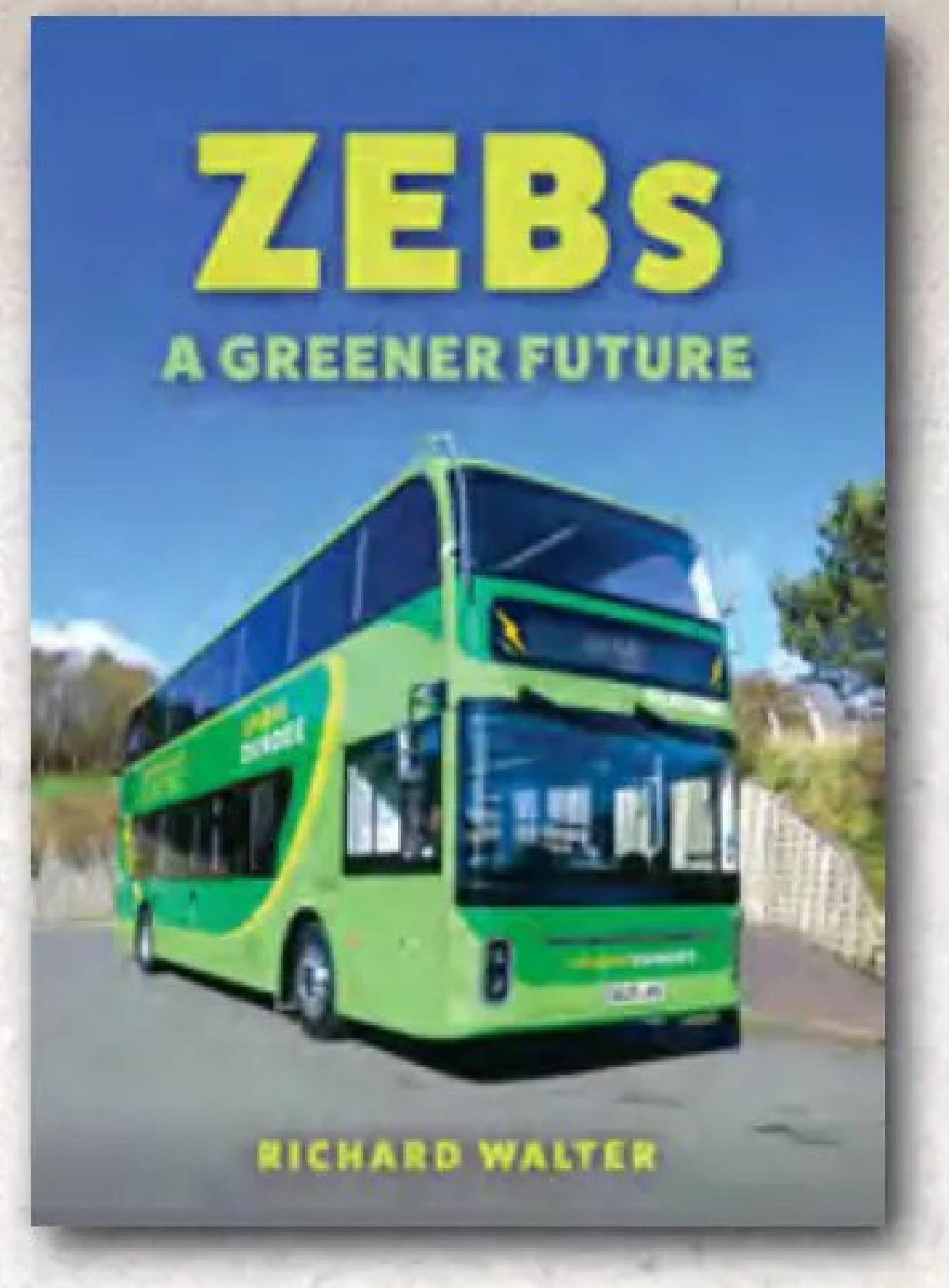

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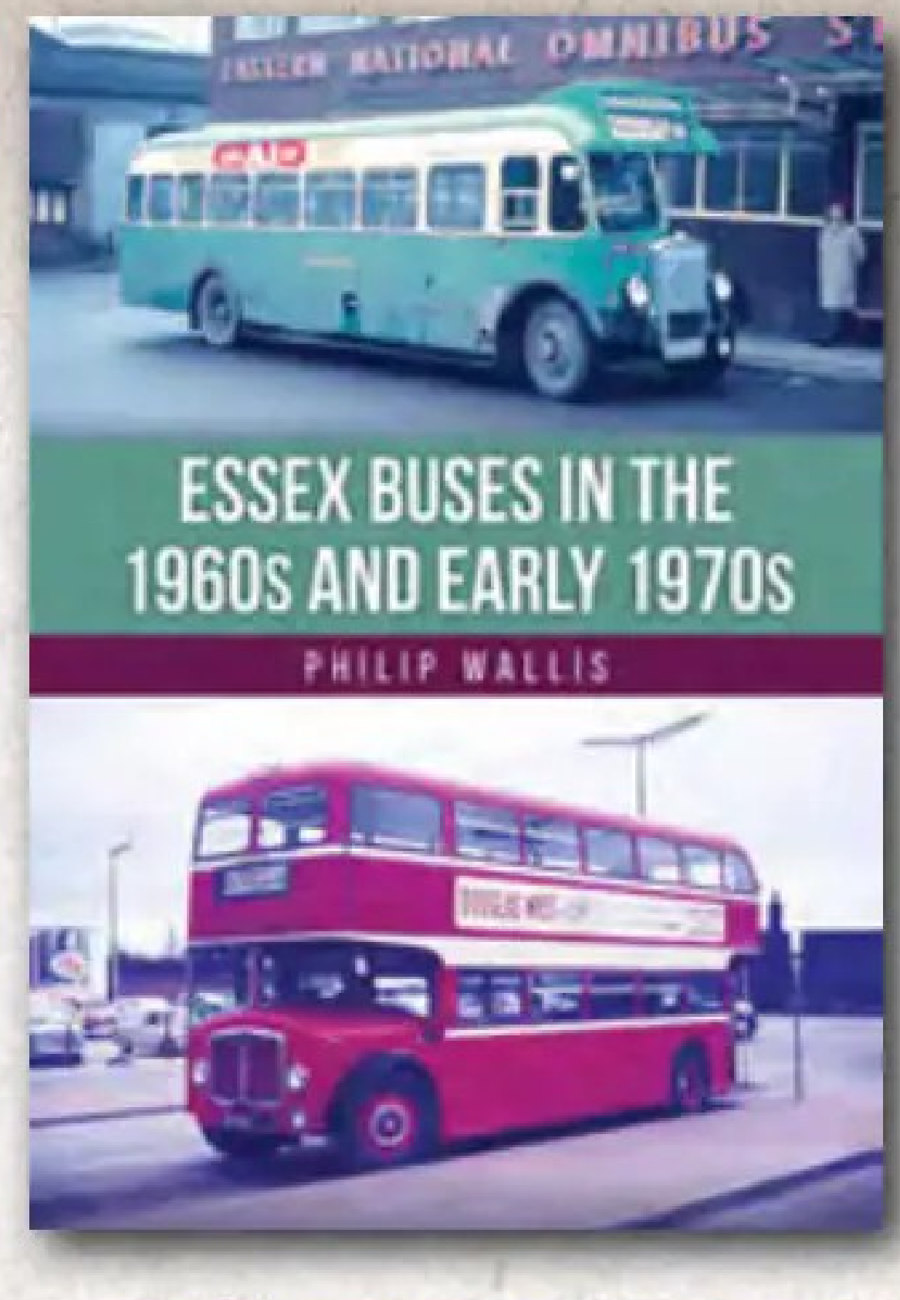

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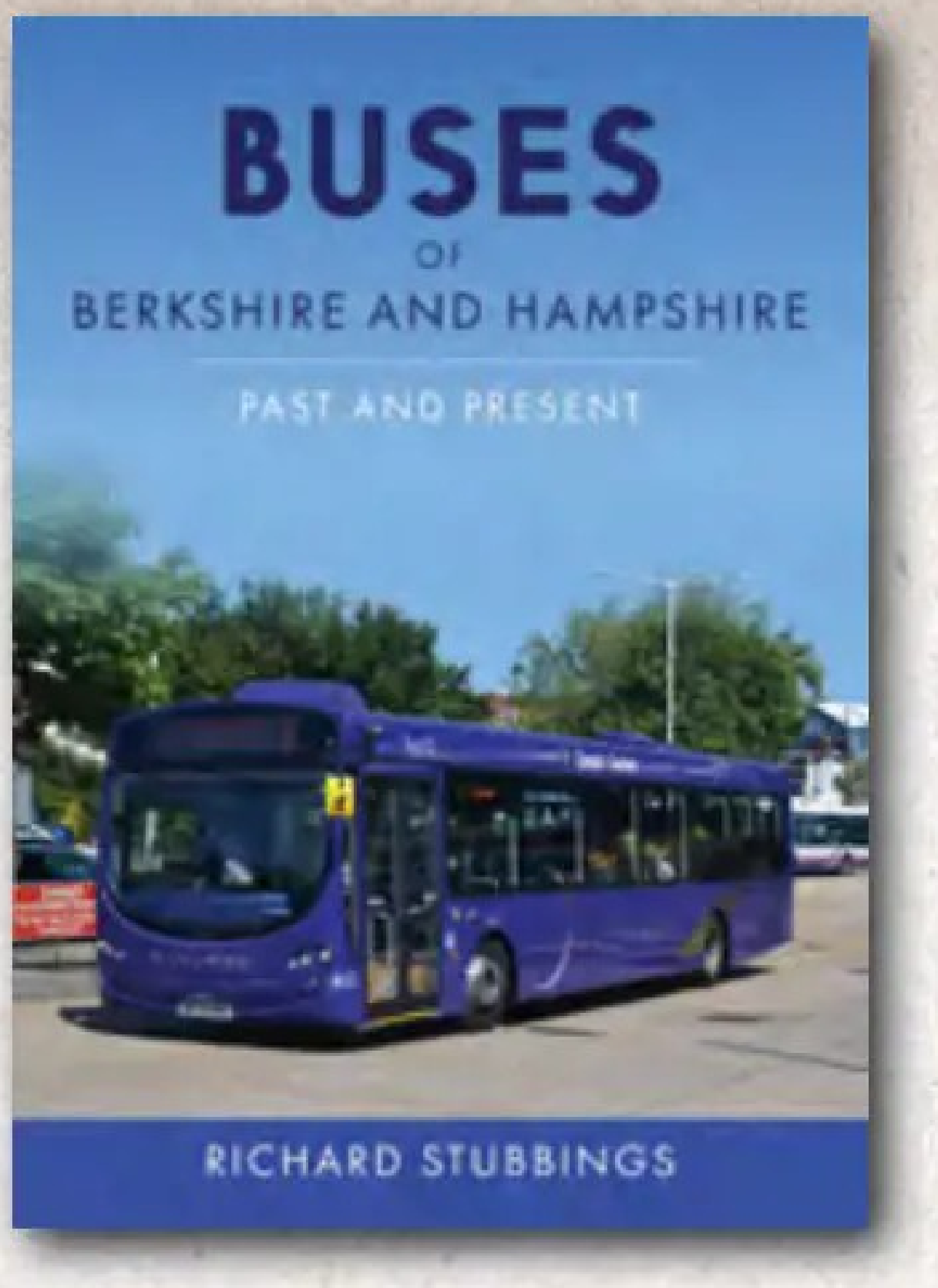

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Globe, Barnsley

B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 1243 (SK24 CUA) has joined the fleet; it was previously with Belle Vue, Heaton Chapel.

Go-Ahead London GA

On order are Wright StreetDeck Electroliner DEL132-43 for Northumberland Park route 230, DEL144-58 for Bexleyheath route 486 and DEL159-71 for Merton route 200, single-door (with luggage racks) BYD BD11 double-deckers EBD164-88 for Croydon Superloop route SL7, Wright GB Kits Electroliner SEL54 for Merton route 219, SEL55-63 for Bexleyheath route B11, SEL64/5 for Northumberland Park route 184, SEL66-73 for Bexleyheath route B12 and SEL74-80 for Bexleyheath route B15. Further SEO-class Alexander Dennis Enviro100EVs are on order for Sydenham route 162.

Into service in October were H42/19D-seated BYD BD11 EBD114/5/8/25-7/30/7/8 (LA25 EVM/R/N, EWB, LF75 OUT, LA25 EWC/D/M, LF75 OUA) and 10.9m B30D-seated Wright GB Kite Electroliner SEL14, 20/3/5 (LV25 CRU, CSX, CTE, CVR) at Camberwell, 10.6m H40/20D-seated Wright StreetDeck Electroliner DEL30/3/5/6/8, 41-5, 111/2/5 (LV25 OTF, WXM/O/P/S/W-Z, WAY, CUJ/K, CVU) at Bexleyheath and B21F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro100EV SEO3, 5, 8, 15 (YX25 OBK/M/P/Y) at Orpington. We understand that EBD116/7/21/2/9/32/3/5/6 are registered LF75 OTM/N/R/S/V-Z. EBD118 and StreetDeck Electroliner DEL21 (LV25 CWF) carry Royal British Legion poppy appeal wraps.

Repainted in a pale green Kent Country livery for service 477 (Orpington-Dartford) are Alexander Dennis Enviro200 SE199-201 (YY14 WDU-W).

Further to last month's report, Wright StreetDeck WSD9, 12/4, 21 (SN18 XZC/F/H/R) have been transferred to Thames Travel, while part open-top Alexander Dennis Enviro400 E14 (SN06 BNZ) has gone to Brighton & Hove.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 E112 (LX09 FBC) has been withdrawn and was sold to Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) in August along with E110/1/3/8/25 (LX09 FBA/B/D/K, FCA), with E113/8 sold on to 1st Bus Stop, Gravesend. Fleet Commercials & Conversions has taken E222 (SN61 DFA) and converted it to open-top for sale.

Go-Coach, Swanley, Kent

The three new B12F-0seated Rightec RB6 electric minibuses, the first in service anywhere, are numbered 2201/2 (LX75 APF, ADU) and 2203. Together with Mellor Sigma 7s 3101/2 (MX22 LGA, LFV), they operate peak hours only CrossBus service GC1 (Greenhithe-Ebbsfleet International station) and an inter-peak demand responsive service in the area. Rightec are Chinese-built King Long vehicles sold by a division of Wrightbus.

Go Goodwins, (Clwyd), Mostyn

C53Ft-seated Neoplan N5217SHDC Starliner OU15 ZVZ has been acquired, ex-Clynnog & Trefor.

Golden Tours, Alperton

H43/25F-seated Yutong U11DD demonstrator UU11 DDD has been acquired, re-registered LL73 SZV, and has received Warner Brothers Studio Tour livery.

Ripley
141
hulleys
YX75 KVV

High Peak Buses has revived the Hulleys name and colours for five 40-seat Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs operated from the former Hulleys base at Baslow on Derbyshire County Council tendered services in the Crich area. Fifth of the quintet 5210 (YX75 KVV) was photographed at Matlock Green. JOHN YOUNG

Go North East GA

Red/blue fleet livery has been applied to Optare Solo M925SR 653/5/90 (NK15 GDE/J, NK66 CXF), while Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 6160/1 (LJ62 KZD/P) have allover advertising wraps for women's recruitment.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 9028 (YX19 ONM) passed to D&G Bus in September.

Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 3965 (NK06 JXB) has been withdrawn.

Go North West GA

Mercedes-Benz Citaro 6236/8/9 (BF62 JYU/X/Y) have received yellow Bee Network livery.

Go South Coast GA

Further to last month's report, there are six tri-axle Volvo B8L/MCV EvoSeti H55/34F with Bluestar, not ten, 1052-7 (BU75 WLF-H/J-L).

Placed into reserve are Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs 1001/2/5 (YN54 AFK/X, YN56 FFO), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 1267 (BX09 PGF) and Optare Solo M950 3778 (CE52 UXC).

Wigley, Carlton (dealer) has taken Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs 1011 (YN06 JWD) and Volvo B7TL/Plaxton President training vehicle 1910 (W474 WGH, *VJI 368, W474 WGH*) for scrap.

Go South West GA

Transferred from Metrobus in September were H45/31F-seated Scania N270UD OmniCity YP09 HWE/S.

Correcting last month's report, Irizar i6S coaches DL/GO25 DLC are numbered 71214/5.

Optare Solo M780SE 1823 (YJ15 AXT) has been renumbered 71823.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 138 (WA08 LDK) has been withdrawn.

Bova Magiq 71106 (M800 DLC) reverted to original registration WA56 ENV before passing to Shears, Winkleigh (dealer) along with VDL Futura 1109 (WA57 CYT, *T7 BBC, WA57 CYT*), with the Futura moving on to Hills Services, Stibbs Cross.

Optare Solo M710 71835 (YJ59 NMV) has passed to Oakley, Plymouth.

Gwynfor, Llangefni

DAF SB3000/Van Hool Alizée C55F Y242 KJM (*BIB 5491*) has been acquired, ex-Bibby, Ingleton.

Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Panther C53F GSV 494 has passed to K&P, Llangefni, while Volvo B7R/Plaxton Profile SP56 EBO, Volvo B7TL/TransBus President LK04 NME and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 KX58 GUO have been sold for scrap.

Hafan, Blaenau Ffestiniog

Volvo B12M/Jonckheere Mistral C55F SG03 ZEZ (*C8 NCB, SG03 ZEZ, KSK 948*). has been acquired, ex-Lakeside, Ellesmere.

Hams, Flimwell, East Sussex

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC GH17 GTU (*MC17 HAM*) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC GE21 CPN (*DW21 HAM*) have passed to Weardale, Stanhope.

The Harrogate Bus Company TD

B39F-seated Mercedes-Benz Citaro hybrid 1513 (BV25 MDJ), in generic Transdev charcoal livery, has been transferred from Yorkshire Coastliner.

All the opportunity-charged Volvo 7900E electric single-deckers, 801-8 (BV18 XZA-D, BN68 XSA-D), were withdrawn in September when 802/5 left the fleet.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1853 (FJ58 LSL) has been transferred to Team Pennine, while PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken similar 1834/9 (YJ07 PCZ, PDX; *H14/9 ESU; YJ07 PCZ, PDX*).

High Peak Buses CB

B40F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 5206-10 (YX74 ODY, YY25 DJX, YX75 KUJ, KVU/V) have joined the fleet to operate newly gained tendered services from the former Hulleys base at Baslow. Ironically, 5206 was previously in the Hulleys fleet, used subsequently by Metrobus, while 5207 has been with Go North East; 5206 is in plain white, and 5207-10 carry Hulleys livery of cream with dark blue upswept rear panels separated by a gold stripe with Hulleys by High Peak Buses fleetnames.

Meanwhile, Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 5212/3 (YY75 KTO/P) were new for the main fleet in October in red Skyline livery for service 199; 5212 carried fleetnumber 5215 in error for the first few days. They bring

Lyles of Batley has applied the latest livery for its Longstaff local bus fleet to FD02 SEO, an Optare Excel L1180 new to Nottingham City Transport in June 2002 as its 562. This may be the last Excel in regular service anywhere. DANIEL STAZICKER

the total of the type here to eight, matching the Skyline peak vehicle requirement, although Optare Versa 765 (YJ67 GBE) and Mercedes-Benz Citaro 801 (FM11 EJV, *KMN 201L*) also carry Skyline livery.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 510 (YX60 DXR) has been transferred to Centrebus and 593 (YY64 GWL) has returned to D&G Bus.

Horseman, Reading CTG

Volvo B8R/Plaxton Panther YX17 OHH/J have been transferred to JH Coaches, Birtley, Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther RX57 GXS to Alpine, Llandudno.

Ipswich Buses

New Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 15-8 (SN75 YVU-X), reported last month, are seated H51/34F and painted white. Similar H48/32F-seated demonstrator YY73 TGZ was on loan in September.

The PSV Circle reports the withdrawal of Scania N230UD OmniCity double-decker 50 (SGZ 3350, *YN08 DHF*) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 76 (LX58 LML, *09 D 3732*), and the sale of Volvo B7R/Jonckheere Modulo 1 (FL02 ZXK, *SGZ 1001, SGZ 3351, FL02 ZXK*).

JH Coaches, Birtley, Tyne & Wear CTG

Volvo B8R/Plaxton Panther C53F YX17 OHH/J have been transferred from Horseman, Reading, while two C53Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M acquired from Mobico subsidiaries are BJ15 UVL from National Express Coaches and BJ15 OVO from Lucketts Group.

Volvo B11R/Sunsundegui SC7 JH15 BUS, COM were re-registered NG15 YOF/H respectively and Volvo B11R/Plaxton Panther JH60 COM became YX15 OVS before moving to Alpine, Llandudno along with Volvo B9R/Plaxton Elite SO12 WJD.

Johnsons, Henley-in-Arden CTG

C55Ft-seated Irizar i6S integral YT68 LCM-O have been transferred from Swans, Chadderton.

Llew Jones, Llanrwst ST

Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BT66 UAB (*171 D 51762*) has passed to George Edwards & Son, Bwlchgwyn, Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Autobus Classique Nouvelle 2 AAZ 6220 to Williams, Bala.

OR Jones & Sons, Llanfaethlu

Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Cheetah C33F SF57 JSU has been acquired ex-Pat's Coaches, Southsea.

K&P, Llangefni

Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Panther C53F GSV 494 has been acquired e- Gwynfor, Llangefni.

Reregistered are Scania K410EB6/Irizar i6 YT19 EFK to M10 MEY and Scania K400EB6/Irizar i6 HC14 SBC to N7 FEY.

Kearney's, Nuneaton

Usually reported in Fleet News Ireland as a Co. Cork operator, tri-axle Scania K410CB6/Irizar i6S C57Ft YN74 XSR, new in January, was noted recently in Belfast with a legal address in Warwickshire.

The Keighley Bus Company TD

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H44/29F 2410 (SN57 GNO), new to Lothian Buses and acquired with the Reliance, Sutton-in-the-Forest bus operations earlier this year, has been transferred from Yorkshire Coastliner; it remains in Lothian dark red and white.

Transferred to Team Pennine in September were Volvo B7TL/Plaxton President 2718 (PN02 XBT) and Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2788 (LF52 USW). Although there was a farewell event for the President-bodied B7TLs in Keighley earlier this year, at least one will survive longer in another of Transdev's Yorkshire fleets.

Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 2777/8 (BF63 HCY, HDA) were transferred then to The Burnley Bus Company.

Withdrawn are Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 1750 (K50 TDV, *YJ05 FNH*) and 1805 (JRZ 1805, *YJ05 KHC*).

PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken BMC Condor 220 1302-4 (YK55 AVL, YJ56 LJZ, WGC), Volvo B10BLE/Wright Renown 1333/4/40 (T541/3 AUA, T126 OAH), Volvo B7TL/Plaxton President 2702/14/30 (Y702/14 HRN, LK51 XGY) and Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2789 (LF52 USX).

Kinchbus WG

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC transferred to Trent Barton are 109/28/46-57/74 (YX17 NTK, YX67 VFF, YX20 OHA-H/J-L/N, OJS), while Optare Versa V1090 (YD63 VCZ) has gone to TM Travel.

Optare Solo M950SL 1 (YJ07 EFR) has been withdrawn after catching fire at Loughborough University in September.

Ripley, Carlton (dealer) has taken Mercedes-Benz Citaro O530 906 (BN09 FWZ).

Konectbus GA

H45/31F-seated Scania N270UD OmniCity YP09 HWH was transferred from Metrobus in September, shortly before Go-Ahead completed its sale of this business to Transport Made Simple.

Withdrawn by then were Scania CN230UB OmniCity single-deckers 461/2 (NK56 KJF/A), Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 470 (EU05 CLJ) and convertible open-top Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 502 (LF52 ZNE).

PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart 259 (EU56 FLP), while Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 510 (LB02 YWX) has also left the fleet.

Lakeside, Ellesmere FG

New in September were C53Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo 24213 (BV75 HTA) and Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt SF75 VZY/Z.

Volvo B11R/Plaxton Panther 20938/9 (IGZ 6136/0) have been re-registered H23/4 LAK respectively, while Volvo B12M/Plaxton Panther 20592 (H23 LAK, *YU05 VFL, GL05 PUL, YU05 VFL, 05 D 49348*) reverted briefly to YU05 VFL before becoming A24 LAK.

Volvo B11R/Plaxton Panther 20936 (IGZ 6129) and Volvo B11R/Jonckheere 20989 (BV17 CVF) have been transferred to AT Brown of Telford.

A dealer has sold Volvo B12M/Jonckheere Mistral 20572 (SG03 ZEZ, *C8 NCB, SG03 ZEZ, KSK 948*) to Hafan, Blaenau Ffestiniog.

Lee's of Durham, Langley Moor

C53FLt-seated Yutong GT12 integrals YK75 LFA/B were new in September.

Leon's, Stafford

VDL Futura FHD2-129 LE75 EON was new in September.

Lewis-Y-Llan, Amlwch

Acquired are Volvo B10M-62/Plaxton Paragon C57F EK51 JBE ex-Taf Valley, Whitland, Volvo B12M/Plaxton Panther Y928 UOL (*MBX 447, R70 JCS, Y928 UOL, A4 FTG*) and NH04 LCH (*AEZ 3801, NH04 LCH, GT04 ZZZ*) ex-Alpine, Llandudno and Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Cheetah C29F YN05 XYY ex-C&T Coaches, Greenock. Y928 UOL has been re-registered 341 TJ.

Iveco Daily 70C21H/Ilesbus I-City Max RJ73 FXT has passed to Richards Bros., Cardigan, while Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Beaver 2 S316 DLG, X256 DEP have been sold for scrap.

Linburg, Sheffield

C61FLt-seated Neoplan N2216/3SHDL Tourliner 36 (OY75 ZWK) was new in September.

Littles, Ilkeston WG

B29F-seated Optare Solo M880 1202 (YN58 NDV) has been transferred from Notts & Derby.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 B6 (SN65 OEY) has been re-registered B26 LTL

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

Marshalls of Sutton on Trent DD187 (PM05 JAM), a recently re-registered Alexander Dennis Enviro400, in Grantham. It was new to Metroline London as TE933. DAVID MITCHELL

Lloyd's, Machynlleth
B40F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX75 KVT and Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 519CDi/Ilesbus C22F BN75 LFO were new in September and Scania K360CB4/Higer Touring LC10 DAN, WYN followed in October.

Powys County Council-owned Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B44F BV19 LPC/K/O/P have joined this fleet, ex-Stagecoach South Wales.

Alexander Dennis Enviro100EV demonstrator AD24 ADL was returned to the manufacturer at the end of September.

Scania K360IB4/Irizar i6 YN16 WTY has passed to Carmel Travel, Caernarfon, Iveco Daily 70C18/Ilesbus Glance LC07 WYN to Peyton Travel, Bridgend and Optare Solo M900SR YJ14 BCO to Weardale, Stanhope.

Lyles, Batley
Optare Excel FD02 SEO has received the latest Longstaff livery. It was new to Nottingham City Transport in June 2002.

Lynx, King's Lynn
Further to last month's report, new Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 35 (YX75 LCL) is branded for services 34/35/36 (King's Lynn-Hunstanton) while 36/7 (YX75 KVF/G) are branded for the 42 (King's Lynn-Fairstead).

M&I, Workington
C19F-seated Mercedes-Benz Sprinter MB75 BUS was new in September.

Marshalls, Sutton-on-Trent
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 DD136-8 (LK58 KHD, KGV, LK60 AEZ) have been re-registered T3 YRR, PM05, 07 JAM respectively, with DD137 named *Jacob Crompton*.

Roy McCarthy, Macclesfield
Another VDL Futura FHD2 for this former purchaser of Plaxton-bodied Volvos, YG75 EKC, was new in October.

Metcalfe, Carlisle
C53Ft-seated Temsa HD12 integral CF75 CPF was new in October.

Metrobus GA
Another Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 transferred from Brighton & Hove is 6921 (BF12 KXJ), which is in an orange, light blue and yellow livery promoting St Catherine's Hospice in Crawley.

Scania N270UD OmniCity double-deckers 6959/73(YP09 HWS/E) were transferred to Go South West in September, while 6976 (YP09 HWH) went to Konectbus shortly before Go-Ahead sold that business and Scrapco, Paddock Wood (dealer) took similar 6968 (YP58 UGJ).

Metroline London DG
New BYD BD11 double-deckers in course of delivery are BDE3050-73 (LF75 OYJ-P/R-Z, OZA-E/G/H/J) for Willesden and BDE3074-94 (LF75 OZK-P/R-X, PAO, PBO/U/V/X-Z, PCO) for Perivale. Further examples on order are BDE3235-67 for routes 95 (Greenford), 260 (Cricklewood) and 491 (Potters Bar) and BDE3268-77 for route 240 (Edgware).

New 10.6m H40/20D-seated Wright StreetDeck Electroliner WDE3123 (LV74 TKK) entered service at Willesden in September, followed there in October by WDE3122 (LV74 TKJ). BYD BD11 double-deckers BDE2999, 3006 (LF25 SXD/N) entered service at Potters Bar in October.

Wright New Routemaster LT762 (LTZ 1762) carries a Royal British Legion poppy appeal wrap.

Withdrawn are Alexander Dennis Enviro200 DE1012/8/20/2/6/8/33 (LK09 ENO, LK59 AVC/F/J/O/R/X), DE1119/22/33/5/6/8-40/2-4 (LK10 BYJ/O/Z, BZB/C/E-G/J/L/M), DE1146/8-51 (LK10 BZO/R-U), Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 VW1036/48/63-72 (LK10 BXD/F/U, LK60 AEJ/L-P/T-W), VW1183 (LK11 CXT, Alexander Dennis Enviro400 TE1089-91/8 (LK60 AGO/U/V, AHG), TE1749 (SN09 CGO) Alexander Dennis Enviro400H TEH1238 (LK61 BLN) .

Enviro200 DE1018 and B9TLs VW1055-8 (LK10 BYA, LK60 AEA-C) have been sold to Halpenny Travel, Blackrock, Co. Loth, DE1020/6/8/33 and VW1049-51/4 (LK10 BXU-W, BXZ) to Hire your Transport, Tadworth, VW1052/3/9 (LK10 BXX/Y, LK60 AED) to Bus & Coach Centre, Forest Hill, Oxfordshire (dealer), Enviro400s TE1742/3 (SN09 CFX/Y) and VW1060-2 (LK60 AEE-G) to South Staffs Coach Hire, Tamworth.

Metroline Manchester DG
BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV BDE211/4/7/21/5 (LF69 UYK/N/R/V/Z) have received yellow Bee Network livery.

Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) has taken Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini VW564/92 (MX58 DWL/V).

Mid Wales Travel, Penrhyncoch
C53Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BU18 YNZ has been acquired, ex-Cresta Coaches, Bridgend, and re-registered C26 MWT.

Van Hool TX15 Alicron BU54 BER has reverted to original registration YJ64 FUW, while similar BW54 BER reverted to YJ13 GWP before passing to Laser Travel, Tonypandy.

Minsterley Motors, Annscroft, Shropshire
Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B38F BU75 WSV was new in September.

National Express West Midlands MO
Scania K230UB OmniLink 1930 (BX10 ABZ) has been reinstated at Walsall, while similar 1884 (BX09 OZL), 1917 (BX59 NTF) and Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 4623 (BX54 XSL) have been withdrawn.

The PSV Circle reports that Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 4604 (BX54 DDN) has gone to PVS, Carlton (dealer) for scrap.

Newbury & District RB
Alexander Dennis Enviro200 650 (YX63 ZVR), transferred from Thames Valley Buses, re-entered service on September 25 in restored black fleet livery.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 789-93 (SN16 OHG/H/J-L) have been transferred back to Reading Buses, while 794 (SN16 OHO) has gone to Thames Valley Buses.

Although still in service, Volvo B9R/Caetano Levante 1406 (BK15 AJX) was advertised for sale in October.

Nottingham City Transport
The six new diesel-powered Wright StreetDeck Electroliner double-deckers are 671-6 (BN75 NWR-W), while further Yutong electric single-deckers are B36F-seated E12s 218-20 (YK75 LNN-P) and B31F-seated E10s 282-92 (YK75 LMX/Y, LNA/C-H/J/L).

Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 637-9 (YN14 MVK-M) have received Navy Line Uni 4 livery

Notts & Derby WG
Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 513CDi/Treka B16FL 1016 (LK13 CYZ, *IXZ 272, LK13 CYZ*) was acquired ex-Stantons of Stoke in September; it is plain white.

Ex-Lothian Alexander Dennis Enviro400H 1405 (SN61 BBF) was sent for conversion to electric drive in July 2024 but has yet to re-enter service.

Optare Solo M880 1202 (YN58 NDV) has been transferred to Littles.

Omega Busways, Higher Walton, Warrington
Lloyd, Hixon (salvage dealer) has taken Alexander Dennis Enviro400H SN63 VTY while Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini V25 HOW (*BJ03 EXR*) and BU53 UMH have been sold for scrap.

Orion, Openshaw, Manchester
Alexander Dennis Trident/East Lancs Myllennium Lolyne PA06 AAU (*HMN 249J*) has been acquired, ex-Xelabus, Eastleigh.

Van Hool TX16 Astron YJ14 CFK has been re-registered OR10 NTR.

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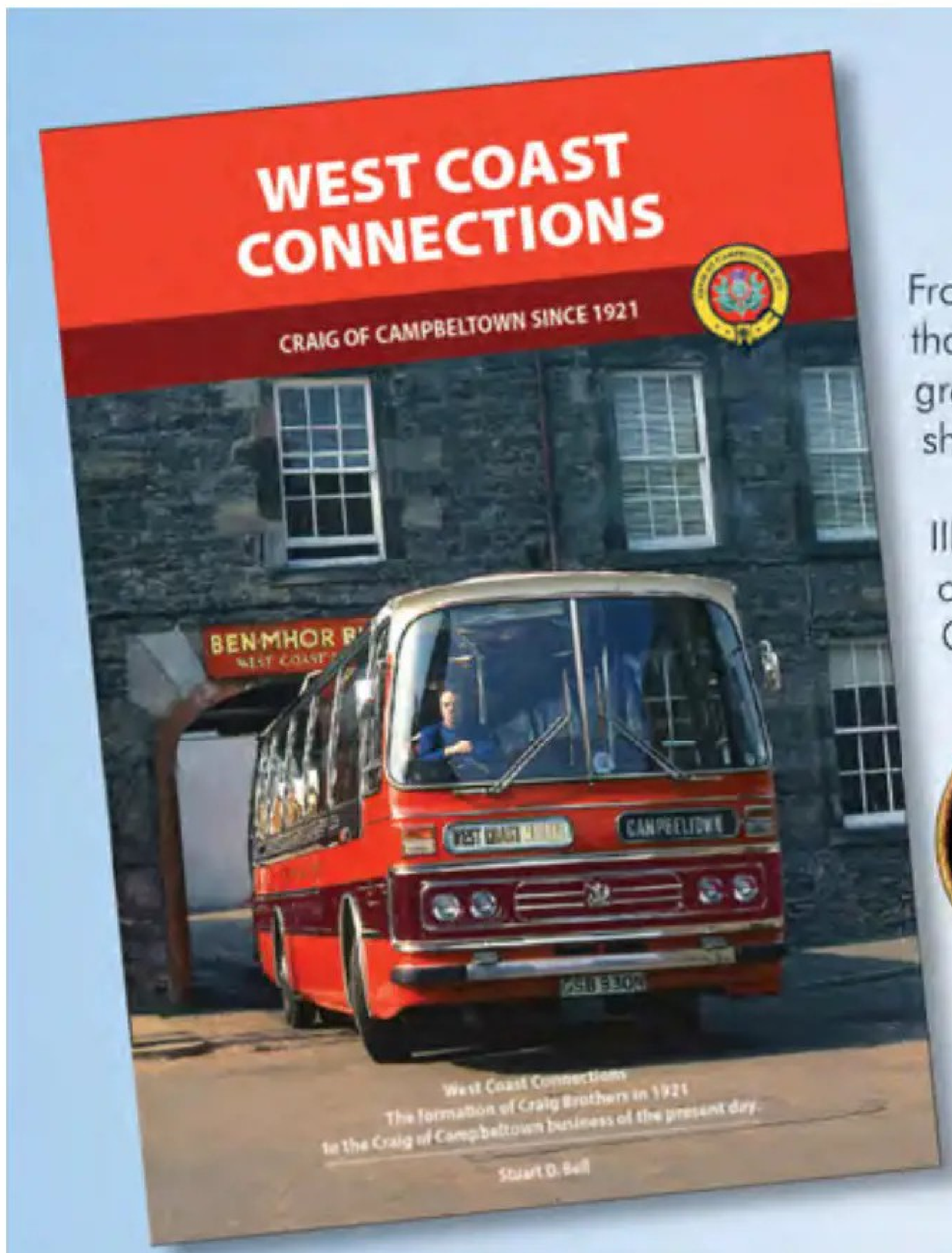
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Owens, Rhiwlas
Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Cheetah C33F DH04 EBJ has been acquired, ex-Oare, Brynford.

Volvo B7R/Plaxton Profile YN05 XZP has been re-registered 123 SBE.

Parrys, Cheslyn Hay, Staffs
C53Ft-seated Van Hool T17 Astron YG75 EKD was new in September.

Pat's Coaches, Southsea, Wrexham
Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D/Plaxton Cheetah SF57 JSU was acquired ex-Clynnog & Trefor and sold on quickly to OR Jones & Sons, Llanfaethlu, while Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Ilesbus C19F V22 RJP (*NX19 ESY, MR19 ABC*) was acquired ex-JRP Direct, Heathfield and re-registered J60 MKD.

PC Coaches, Lincoln
Scania K410CB6/Higer Touring PC75 PCC was new in September.

Peyton Travel, Bridgend
C53FLt-seated Temsa HD12 integral MR75 PEY was new in October.

Pilkington, Accrington
Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516 CDi/Mellor Strata PK20 BUS, BUZ have passed to Shuttle Buses, Kilwinning.

Portsmouth City Coaches, Havant
C53FLt-seated Temsa HD12 integral TT75 PCC was new in October.

Acquired in August were C49FLt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BF61 HBY (*S1 YST, BF61 HBY, W9 AOW, BF61 HBY*) from D&E Coaches, Inverness and similar C55F-seated BN17 JVD (*N5 WTL, BN17 JVD*) from Wheelers Travel, North Baddesley. They have been re-registered N77 RJE, EAE respectively.

Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs M700 ELK reverted to original registration YN53 CFO before passing to Hunter, Leeds

Preston Bus RO
B34F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 20639/40 (YY74 URV/W) have been transferred back from Diamond North West. B43F-seated Enviro200 MMC demonstrator YY25 DKX was on loan for one week in September.

Withdrawn are Optare Solo M1050SR 20401-3 (YJ61 CHD/F/G) and Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi/Mellor Strata 21206/8/22/31 (LS68 FOH/K, LN19 UBD, LO19 VXB).

Procters Coaches GA
C41Ft-seated VDL Futura FHD2-139 21061 (WD14 ZWR, *Y20 DLC, WD14 ZWR, C111 EFS*) has been transferred from Compass Royston.

Transferred to East Yorkshire are Volvo B12B/Caetano Levante 21005 (9743 HP, *YX07 HJD, A15 EYC, YX07 HJD*), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 21037 (SN16 OVS), Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 515CDi/Mellor Strata 21055 (WP24 SUF) and Volvo B9R/Caetano Levante 21057 (OSU 386, *YY63 OEJ*).

Prospect, Lye, West Midlands
New in September were C70FL-seated Irizar i4 PR75 ELL and C53FLt-seated Irizar i6S YN75 ZXE/K.

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YX75 LFH
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Preston Bus 20661 (YX75 LFH), a 9.7m Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC new in September, in service in Burnley. MARK BAILEY

Pulhams, Bourton-on-the-Water GA
New in September were H51/34F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 80697-9 (YX75 KXE-G).

Reading Buses RB
Entry into regular service of the Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV electric double-deckers has been delayed until December, pending completion of work by SSE to connect the charging infrastructure to the grid. However, 2 (RG02 ZEB) carried passengers for the first time as one of the vehicles operating route 462 (Weybridge Station-Brooklands Museum) at the London Bus Museum's Transportfest event on October 19.

H41/35F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 789-93 (SN16 OHG/H/J-L) have rejoined the fleet from Newbury & District; they retain Newbury & District colours, with 789/90 gaining Reading Buses vinyls for school and college services, while 791-3 are branded for White Knight 20 with an amended turquoise stripe.

Ex-Stagecoach North East Scania K270UB/Alexander Dennis Enviro300SG 445 (YR14 CFZ) 445 (YR14 CFZ) gained red Winnersh Triangle park-&-ride 500 livery in September when 447/9 (YR14 CGG/O) were painted in generic silver. Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 751 (YX64 VRL) has lost Claret livery for generic silver.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400H 211/3 (SN11 BVS/U) were withdrawn in September (213 had been out of use since late May) and advertised for sale along with 212 (SN11 BVT) which remained in use while 791-3 were being rebranded.

Redline, Aylesbury
Acquired ex-Arriva London are H41/24D-seated Wright Gemini 2DL LJ61 CEV, CFA.

Volvo B7TL/Plaxton President X154 FBB and Volvo B7TL/East Lancs Myllennium Vyking have passed to Red Rose, Dinton, while Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini LF52 UPO and Alexander Dennis Dart/MCV Evolution AE07 DZB have also left the fleet.

Red Rose, Dinton, Bucks
Volvo B7TL/Plaxton President H41/22F X154 FBB and Volvo B7TL/East Lancs Myllennium Vyking H47/33F have been acquired from Redline, Aylesbury. Also here is B29F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 YY64 YKK, new to TLC Travel, West Bowling.

Richards Bros., Cardigan
C55FLt-seated Neoplan N2216/3SHDC Tourliner RB75 BUS is new, while B40F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YY25 DJO and YX75 KWB have been on loan.

Powys County Council-owned Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa B44F BV19 LPJ/N have joined the fleet, ex-Stagecoach South Wales.

Also acquired are Iveco Daily 70C21H/Ilesbus I-City Max B33F RJ73 FXT ex Lewis-Y-Llan, Amlwch and Mercedes-Benz Vario O816D/Plaxton Cheetah C29F KX14 FHJ ex-Ventura, Cranfield.

Optare Tempo X1200 YJ06 YRY/Z have been withdrawn.

Rosso TD
Sixteen new Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC are due in January to replace the Optare Versa fleet on service 464.

However, the 24-vehicle Rosso operation, acquired with council-owned Rossendale Transport in 2018, is to be absorbed into The Blackburn Bus Company and The Burnley Bus Company from November 29.

Transport UK London
B21F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro100EV 1063 (YX25 ODT) entered service at Battersea in October, completing the batch 1051-63 (YX25 ODE-H/J-N/P/R-T).

Sanders, Holt, Norfolk
Tri-axle Volvo B8L/MCV EvoSeti H60/38F 133 (MA75 BEL) was new in October, entering service in the first week of November. It is named *Mabel Rose Sanders*, after managing director Charles Sanders's youngest granddaughter.

Scania K230UB OmniLink 325 (YT11 LPN) has received a heritage livery of white with orange skirt and a blue stripe and the wording 'Serving communities in North Norfolk for 50 years 1975-2025' above the windows.

Simonds, Diss
C53FLt-seated Yutong GT12 YK75 LFV was new in September.

South Wales Transport, Swansea
Volvo B9R/Plaxton Panther C53F BU13 AOX has been acquired from a Ministry of Defence contractor.

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Further new H51/34F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400MMC for the Sizewell contract are 34492-6 (SN75 YVZ, YWA-D).

Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire ST

Transferred in are Optare Solo M925SR 47958 (YJ15 AEL) and M990SL 48022/36 (YJ15 ANP, YJ66 ASZ) from Stagecoach Yorkshire.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36173 (KX60 DTY) is on loan from Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire, where recently received Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27615 (SF59 FYU) has since gone.

Steel blue livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10844 (SN17 MHY), Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 15722 (PX61 CVC), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 26009 (YX65 PZJ), Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27747/67 (PX11 DNF, PX61 DWK), 27916 (SN63 VUR), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36183 (YN60 FKU), 37095 (YX14 RXV), Optare Solo 47731 (PX10 DZK) and Optare Solo SR 47964/6 (YJ15 ACZ, ADU); 36183 was previously in Lakes livery. Alexander Dennis Enviro400 10014 (PX12 DLV), reported last month as receiving steel blue livery, previously carried allover branding for the Royal British Legion. Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 11121 (SK68 LUL) has lost Stagecoach Gold livery for Lakes livery.

Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart 34715 (PX05 EKJ) is the last example of the once common type in revenue earning service with any Stagecoach fleet.

Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 15225 (YN65 XFF) was severely damaged by fire on the Distington bypass on October 23.

The remains of fire damaged open-top Dennis Trident/Alexander ALX400 17490 (LX51 FMK, *TSV 720, LX51 FMK*) and Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27537 (SV57 BYT) have gone for scrap.

Stagecoach East ST

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10875 (YX67 VDM) has lost yellow distance livery for steel blue, which has also been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro200 37218 (SN64 OKT).

Stagecoach East Midlands ST

New generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV expected for Hull in November in local livery are 80294-312 (SN75 YUU-Y, YVA-H/J-M/O/P), to be joined in January by similar 80357-69 (YX75 KTA/C/D/G/J/K/L/N/P/T-V, KUA) in steel blue.

Steel blue livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro400 10039 (KX12 GXH), 19490 (MX09 APY), 19524 (MX09 KTF), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 11682/5 (YX73 OWU/Y), MAN 18.240/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 24195/7 (FX10 AEF/J), Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27203 (SL64 HYR) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 37459 (SN67 WVA); 24195/7 previously wore sea green specialist livery.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19147 (NK07 HBG) has been reinstated.

Another Alexander Dennis Enviro200 transferred from Stagecoach London for component recovery is 36299 (LX11 AXT).

Reading Buses 445 (YR14 CFZ), a biogas-fuelled Scania K270UB with Alexander Dennis Enviro300SG body, acquired from Stagecoach North East, is the first recipient of a new livery for the Winnersh Triangle park-&-ride service. MARK LYONS

Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) has taken Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19047/74 (MX56 FRP, FTK), 19110 (MX07 HMK) and Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban 21257/8/61/5 (YJ09 FWE/F/K, DK09 GXZ), while Hardwick, Carlton (dealer) has taken similar B7RLE 21273 (DK09 GYH). Also sold for scrap are Alexander Dennis Enviro400H 12049 (MX60 BVR), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19022 (MX06 XAY), MAN 18.240/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 22772/99 (FX09 DCE, DDK), 22869 (SF09 AEX) and Optare Solo SR 47812 (SV12 ATK).

Stagecoach London ST

New 10.6m H40/20D-seated Wright StreetDeck Electroliner 82120 (MF25 HJZ) entered service at Rainham in September, followed in October by 82114/9 (MF25 HHU, HJY) at Barking, 82105/17 (LV25 PWY, MF25 HJV) at Rainham, 82121 (MF25 HKA) at Ash Grove and 82144 (LV25 XWX) at Ash Grove. All of 82099-112 (LV25 OSX/Y, PWN/O/U/X-Z, PXA-C, VOJ/K/M) are in service, with 82112 re-registered WLT 546. Similar new vehicles intended for Bromley are 82145-56 (LX75 ZGZ, ZHA-H/J/K, LV75 FLH) of which 82150/1 entered service at Rainham in October, with 82172-86 (LV75 HHZ, HJC-G/J/K/N/O/U/X, NLG/J/K) to follow at Rainham.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV 80422 (SK25 BCU) carries a Royal British Legion poppy appeal wrap.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400H MMC 11301 (WLT 546) has reverted to original registration YY15 OYS .

Wright New Routemasters LT241/71/2 (LTZ 1241/71/2) have been reallocated to Transport UK London.

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19806/44/5/9/50/2 (LX11 BJO, LX61 DBV/Y, LX12 CZC/D/F) are being converted into training vehicles.

Scania N230UD OmniCity training vehicle 15009 (LX58 CEO) has been transferred to Stagecoach South West, while Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36299 (LX11 AXT) has gone to Stagecoach East Midlands for component recovery.

Withdrawn are Alexander Dennis Enviro400H 12357/60/1 (SN64 OHG/K/L), Scania N230UD OmniCity 15030/1 (LX58 CGF/G), 15114/5 (LX09 FZL/M), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19766 (LX11 BFA), 19800/31/6/47/56 (LX11 BHY, BMO, LX61 DDF, LX12 CZA/K) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36325/70/5 (LX58 CCJ, LX59 EDC/O).

North West Bus Sales, Bolton (dealer) has taken Alexander Dennis Enviro400H 12140 (LX61 DDO) and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19829/48 (LX11 BLV, LX12 CZB), while Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) has taken Enviro400H 12152 (LX61 DCZ), 12363 (SN64 OHP) and Enviro400 19750/2 (LX11 BCO/V).

The head office address has changed from West Ham garage to Lea Interchange garage, Ruckholt Road, London E10.

Stagecoach Manchester ST

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 training vehicle 19289 (MX08 GTZ) has received heritage Stagecoach beachball livery, while steel blue fleet livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro200 37149 (YX64 VMP) and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10613 (SN16 OWR) has gained Bee Network yellow.

Scania N230UD OmniCity 15397 (YT59 RYM) is the second of the type to pass to BorderBus, Beccles. MAN 18.220/Alexander Dennis ALX300 training vehicle 22402 (SP06 DBO) has passed to PVS, Carlton (dealer).

Fire damaged Scania N250UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 15335 (YN67 YLH) has transferred from Stagecoach South East for spares recovery.

Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire ST

Transferred in are Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 15715 (YN60 CKK) and Scania K230UB/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 28677 (YN62 FXU) from Stagecoach Yorkshire, Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27217 (SK15 HBX) from Stagecoach East Scotland and similar 27615 (SF59 FYU) from Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire.

Norwich X44
Serving Communities in North Norfolk for 50 Years
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YT11 LPN

Sanders Services now has a service bus as well as a coach in this heritage livery to mark 50 years in business. Scania K230UB OmniLink 325 (YT11 LPN), photographed in Castle Meadow, Norwich with the standard all-yellow single-deck livery visible behind, was originally a Scania demonstrator. TONY WILSON

Steel blue livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27221 (SK15 HCC), Scania K230UB/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 28676 (YN62 FXT) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36816/7/9 (PO62 MPV, MVU, MXY).

Recently received Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36173 (KX60 DTY) has been loaned to Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27913 (SN63 VUM) was destroyed by fire at Gillmoss depot on October 12.

Also withdrawn are MAN 18.240/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 24129/60/5/78 (PO59 HXU, MWP/Y, MXM), leaving 24134/59 (PO59 HXZ, MWN) as the last of the type operational. Similar 24130/2/3/6-9/54-6/66/8/70/2/5/6/80 (PO59 HXV/X/Y, HYB/C/F/G, MWG/J/K, PO59 MXA/B/D/F/J/K/P) and original style Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27521 (GX06 DZC) have been sold for scrap.

Stagecoach Midlands ST

New generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV double-deckers expected for Northampton are 80313-23 (YX75 LGE-G/J-L/N/O/U/V/W), 80324-37 (YX75 KPF/G/J-L/N-P/R/T-V/Y/Z), 80338-46 (YX75 KRD/E/J/K/N/O/U/V/Z), 80347-56 (YX75 KJE/F/J/K/N/O/U/V/Y/Z), all in steel blue livery.

Steel blue has been applied to Scania K230UB/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 28629 (KX12 ANF), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36213 (KX60 LHV), 36754 (KX62 BTF) and 37065/8 (YY63 YRM/P).

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 10033 (KX12 GXB) has been converted to open top.

Stagecoach North East ST

The first Yutong U11DD double-decker for Stagecoach, 83000 (YK75 LCT), has arrived, allocated initially to Slatyford depot although intended for Stockton. It carries local livery.

The last of the latest batch of new Yutong E12 single-deckers to be reported is 73190 (YK75 LCL). Similar 73177-83 (YK75 LNR/T-Y) entered service from Slatyford depot as planned, but 73184-9 (YK75 LNZ, LOA/D/F, LCG/J) initially entered service at Sunderland and 73191-4 (YK75 LCM-P) have gone on loan to Stagecoach West Scotland. The registrations of 73188/9/91-4 correct those given last month.

Further recipients of steel blue livery are Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19432 (NK58 FMU), 19682 (NK60 DPO), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 26070 (SN66 WMC), Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27178 (SN64 OKD), 27239 (SN65 OBZ) 27733/9 (NK11 BFZ, BGX) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 37313 (SN65 OJD).

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27688 (CN60 CVF) has transferred to Stagecoach South West.

The ranks of operational MAN 18.240/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 have been thinned by placing 24101/3/4/6/11-3 (NK09 FLL/N/P/V, FMC-E) into reserve. Similar 22570/80 (SP08 DCV, DDN) have been donated to local schools, 24117 (PX59 AZC) to Cleveland Police.

Dennis Trident/Alexander ALX400 open toppers 17239/40 (X239, 368 NNO), 17643/5 (W643/5 RND) and Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart 35224/61 (KX56 JZF, YN56 SGZ) have been sold.

Stagecoach South ST

Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10962 (SN18 KOE) has received the latest version of Coastliner livery, while steel blue has been applied to similar 11231 (SN69 ZDM), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 26203/12/7/24 (SN67 XCV, XDE/K/T), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36256 (WA11 CHV) and 36925 (411 DCD, *YX63 GYJ*); 26203/12/7/24 previously carried yellow distance livery.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27659 (GX10 KZM) has been transferred to Stagecoach South West and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36139 (SF10 BZR) has gone on loan there.

Withdrawn are TransBus Trident/ALX400 18006-8/72/6/9 (SF53 BYY/Z, WA04 CTE), Alexander Dennis Enviro400 19354 (MX08 UDE), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36026 (GX07 HUP) and similar fire damaged 36833 (GX62 BGE). The Tridents were not used here.

Stagecoach South East ST

Recipients of steel blue livery are Scania N250UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 15334 (YN67 YLG), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 26239/42/50 (YW19 VNJ/M/V), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36496 (GN12 CLO), 36897 (GN13 HHM) and Optare Solo SR 48031 (YJ66 ARZ).

Fire damaged Scania N250UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 15335 (YN67 YLH) has been transferred to Stagecoach Manchester for spares recovery.

Withdrawn are Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 15476 (GN09 AZR), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36122 (GN10 JCY), Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27582 (GX58 GKP) and Optare Solo 47119 (GX54 DXU). Ensign, Purfleet (dealer) has taken Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 15495 (GN09 BBZ).

Stagecoach South Wales ST

Steel blue livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 26191 (YX67 VAF), Scania K230UB/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 28728 (YN15 KFX) and Optare Solo SR 48043 (YJ69 CPZ); 26191 was previously in Stagecoach Gold livery, while 48043 was in the TrawsCymru Connect scheme. That Solo has clearly been retained rather than returned to Powys County Council, although similar 48041/2 (YJ69 CPX/Y) have left.

Powys County Council-owned Volvo B8RLE/MCV EvoRa with new homes are 21352/6/9/60 (BV19 LPC/K/O/P) at Lloyd's, Machynlleth and 21355/8 (BV19 LPJ/N) at Richards Bros., Cardigan.

Stagecoach South West ST

Transferred in are Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 10922-4/8 (SN67 XAP/R/S/W) from Stagecoach West Scotland, Scania N230UD OmniCity training vehicle 15009 (LX58 CEO) from Stagecoach London, Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27125-30 (SL14 LTO/T, SN64 OFO/P/R/S) from Stagecoach East Scotland, similar 27659 (GX10 KZM) from Stagecoach South and 27688 (CN60 CVF) from Stagecoach North East; 10922 has received a Callywith College promotional livery.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36139 (SF10 BZR) is on loan from Stagecoach South.

Well out of territory, MAN 18.240/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 24140/1/8 (WA59 FWV/W, FXE) along with some Stagecoach South West drivers covered a rail replacement operation between Guildford and Havant during the last week of October.

Withdrawn are Alexander Dennis Enviro 400 19268 (MX08 GPE), Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27809 (SV62 BZA), the last two Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart here, 34876 (WA06 HNK), 35171 (WA56 FKY), similar training vehicle 35245 (WA56 NNJ), Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36143 (SF10 BZV), Optare Solo 47535 (WA57 FXT) and Volvo B9R/Plaxton Panther training vehicle 53603 (KX58 NBL).

Stagecoach West ST

The company's Bristol operations are to be transferred to Stagecoach South Wales at a date still to be announced.

GROUP CODES

AA	Arriva
CB	Centrebus
CTG	Coach Travel Group
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
GA	Go-Ahead Group
MO	Mobico
RA	RATP Dev
RB	Reading Buses
RO	Rotala
ST	Stagecoach Group
TD	Transdev
WG	Wellglade Group

New generation Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV 80229/30/3 (YX25 NWY/Z, NXC) moved from storage in Bristol to Cheltenham depot where they join 80239 (YX25 NXJ). They were used for driver training there early in October, with 80229 the first to enter passenger service on October 13 on service 94/X, followed a few days later by 80233. While these four retain their original registrations, the other 13, still in store, will gain new 75-prefixed marks.

Gloucester depot has had Scania K280CB4/Higer Fencer f1 B38F demonstrator YN75 VGZ on loan from September 30 for an expected stay of about one month.

The company's heritage ECW-bodied Bristol VRT/SL3, 19950 (JOU 160P), celebrated 50 years of service in October. It entered service on town routes with the original Cheltenham District Traction Company on October 1, 1975, numbered 5030. It is currently painted in 1930s style Cheltenham District livery and is used on special occasions.

Repainted into steel blue livery are Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 15340 (YP67 XBN), ex-Stagecoach Gold and losing its service 55 branding, Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 15980/9 (YN14 OWX, YN64 XST), 15989 ex-Poppy appeal livery, and Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27714 (PO11 BCF).

Relegated to reserve is Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36098 (MX59 JBO).

TransBus Pointer Dart training vehicle 34461 (YN53 ZRY) has been withdrawn, while Alexander Dennis Trident/ALX400 18192 (MX54 LPZ) and 18413/37/44 (AE06 GZK, VU06 JCJ, JDJ) have been sold for private preservation.

Stagecoach Yorkshire ST

Steel blue livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 26028 (YX65 RBV), 37454 (YX67 VGR) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 36460 (YN61 FXY); 37454 previously carried Barnsley Townlines branding.

Transferred out are Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 15715 (YN60 CKK) and the last Scania K230UB/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 here, 28677 (YN62 FXU), to Stagecoach Merseyside & South Lancashire, and Optare Solo M925SR 47958 (YJ15 AEL) and M990SL 48022/36 (YJ15 ANP, YJ66 ASZ) to Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire.

Scania N230UD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400 15711 (YN60 CKE) has been donated to South Yorkshire Police and Optare Solo 47467 (YN07 OSE) has been withdrawn.

Stott, Milnsbridge, Huddersfield

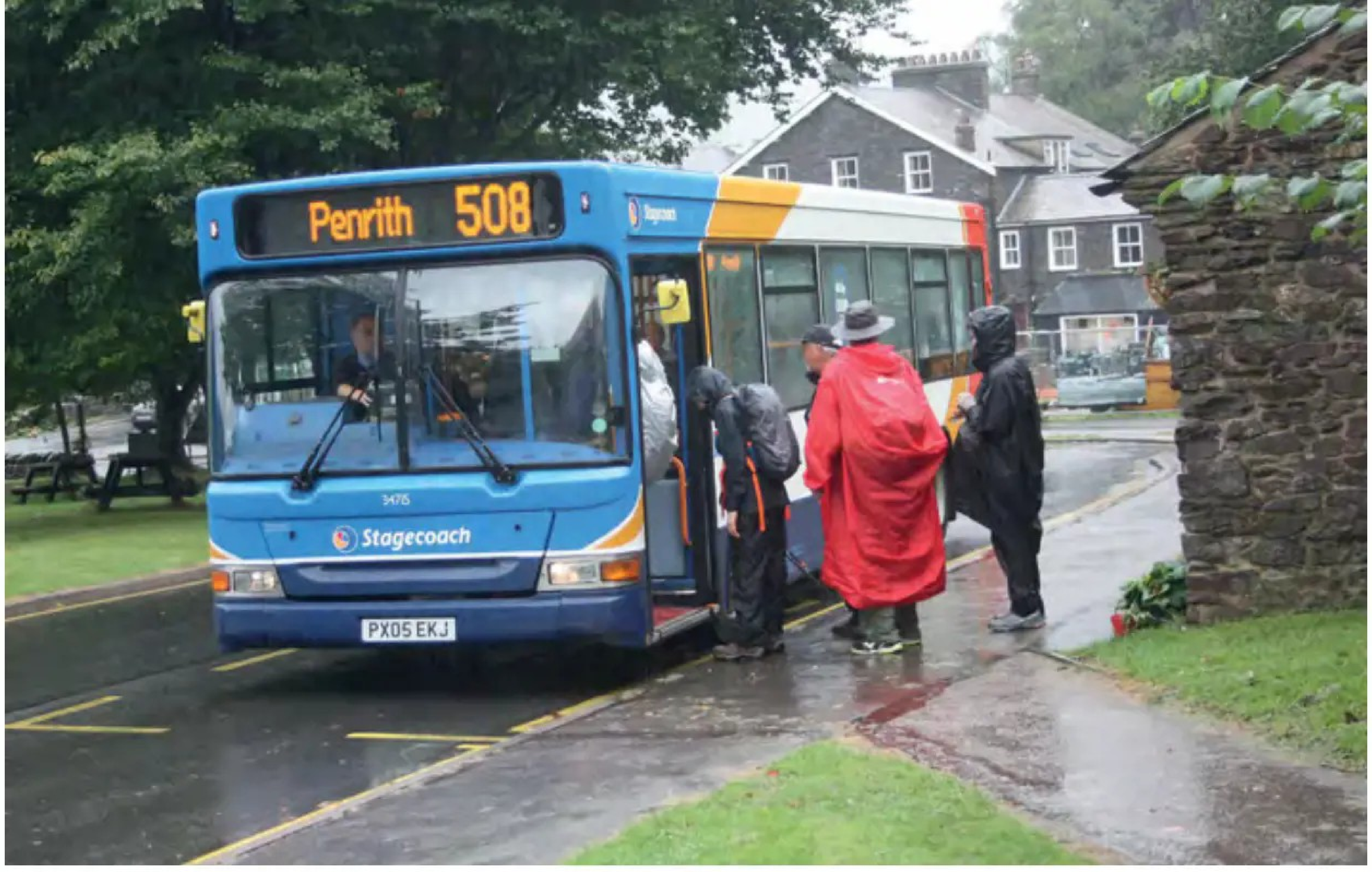
Notable purchases for National Express duties are appropriately liveried C53FLt-seated Temsa HD13 integrals ST75 OTT, TTS, the first of their type for the NatEx network.

H49/37F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC SL69 XWW has been acquired ex-New Punjab, Slough and painted into fleet livery.

Optare Solo YJ55 YHB has passed to Cawthorne, Aston.

Swans, Chadderton CTG

Irizar i6S integral YT68 LCM-O have been transferred to Johnsons, Henley-in-Arden.



Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire 34715 (PX05 EKJ), an Alexander Dennis Pointer Dart, has become the last Pointer Dart in revenue earning service with the group. It became 20 years old in June. It has worked all its life in Cumbria and was one of 475 10.7m Pointer Darts delivered between 2003 and 2006. This picture from August 2016 shows waterproofed passengers boarding it at Glenridding in typical Lake District weather. It retains this pre-2020 Stagecoach livery today. JOHN YOUNG

Tanat Valley, Llanrhaeadr-ym-Mochnant

Acquired are Scania K250UB/Irizar i3 B44F 263/4 (YP64 WVW; PA66 MTX, *SC13 BUS)* and C63Ft-seated Scania K410EB6 OmniExpress YN65 XDJ ex-Lucketts Group, Volvo B8R/Plaxton Panther C57F YX18 LHA/B and tri-axle Volvo B11R/Plaxton Panther C63Ft YX18 LHC ex-Hodgson, Barnard Castle, C39F-seated Temsa MD9 midicoach YJ69 AKF ex-Tilley, Wainhouse Corner, Volvo B11R/Plaxton Panther C40FLt MP21 MPT ex-RHN Consultancy, Llanelli and Scania K410EB6/Irizar i6S C53Ft YT19 EFM ex-City Circle, Newbridge.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 SN55 HSF passed to Thomas of Rhondda, Porth and not Yelloway, Chadderton as reported last month.

Taw & Torridge, Merton, Devon

C61FLt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo L UK75 TAW was new in September.

Team Pennine TD

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse Urban B44F 1853 (FJ58 LSL) has been transferred from The Harrogate Bus Company and painted into fleet livery. while Volvo B7TL/Plaxton President H41/27F 2718 (PN02 XBT) and Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini H41/24F 2788 (LF52 USW) arrived from The Keighley Bus Company in September. Both B7TLs were new to London fleets, respectively Go-Ahead PVL269 and Arriva VLW82; 2718 retains its overall advertisement for West Yorkshire's under-19s M Card, while 2788 remains red and white. All three of these arrivals are based at Huddersfield.

PVS, Carlton (dealer) has taken Optare Tempo X1200 1405/7 (YJ09 EYG/K; *H5, 7 XPL; YJ09 EYG/K*) and Volvo B7TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2753 (PJ05 ZVZ).

Thames Travel GA

Wright StreetDecks transferred from Go-Ahead London and converted to single-door layout are 80917/20/69/76 (SN18 XZC/F/H/R).

Thames Valley Buses RB

Further to last month's report, new Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 171 (YX75 LCY) and 690-6 (YX75 LCZ, LDA/C-F/J) entered service during September.

H41/35F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 794 (SN16 OHO) was transferred from Newbury & District in October to replace Enviro400 1209 (SN11 BTF) which has been advertised for sale.

Withdrawn during September were Optare Solo 126/9/30 (YJ13 HJX, HNG/H) and Alexander Dennis Enviro200 659-63 (KX64 AEF/G/J-L); the Solos have been advertised for sale and the Enviro200s are being returned to Dawsongroup, Hellaby (dealer). Optare Solo M925SR 191/2 (YJ66 AEW/X) were returned to Dawsongroup in October.

Thomas, West Ewell, Surrey

Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt LJ75 VXY is new.

TJs Travel, Ryhill, West Yorks

Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M/2 BV75 HSY was new in September when Volvo B8R/Plaxton Leopard YX16 NXK passed to Hammond, Nottingham.

TM Travel WG

B36F-seated Optare Versa V1090 832 (YD63 VCZ) is another transferred from Kinchbus, placed in service still in blue/yellow livery.

Withdrawn are Scania K320IB4/Irizar i4 72 (FJ10 OXM) and Optare Solo M950 488/90 (FJ10 EHL/N).

Scania N94UD OmniDekka/East Lancs 1176 (YN06 JYL) has passed to 2 Way, Scunthorpe.

Transport UK London

Into service at Walworth in October were 10.9m Wright GB Kite Electroliner single-deckers 1743/4/61-4/6 (LV25 XZD/E, ZBF, LY25 OYG/H, LX75 ZFT/V), with 1765/7-72 (LX75 ZFU/W/Y/Z, ZGA-C) due to follow.

Introduction of GB Kite Electroliners on routes C10 and P5 at Walworth will allow the withdrawal of all 35 Caetano e.City Gold electric single-deckers, 1500-34 (BV69 KTP/T/U/X, BV20 GNZ, GOA, GPY/Z, GOC, GRF, GOE/H/J, GRK, GOK, GRU/X/Z, GSO/U/Y/Z, GTF/U/Y/Z, GUA/C/D/F-H/J/K/O), the only examples of the type in the UK.

Transferred in are B25F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200s 8251-8 (YY64 TXB-F, YX14 RYU-W), on loan from First Bus London since May, and officially purchased in August and

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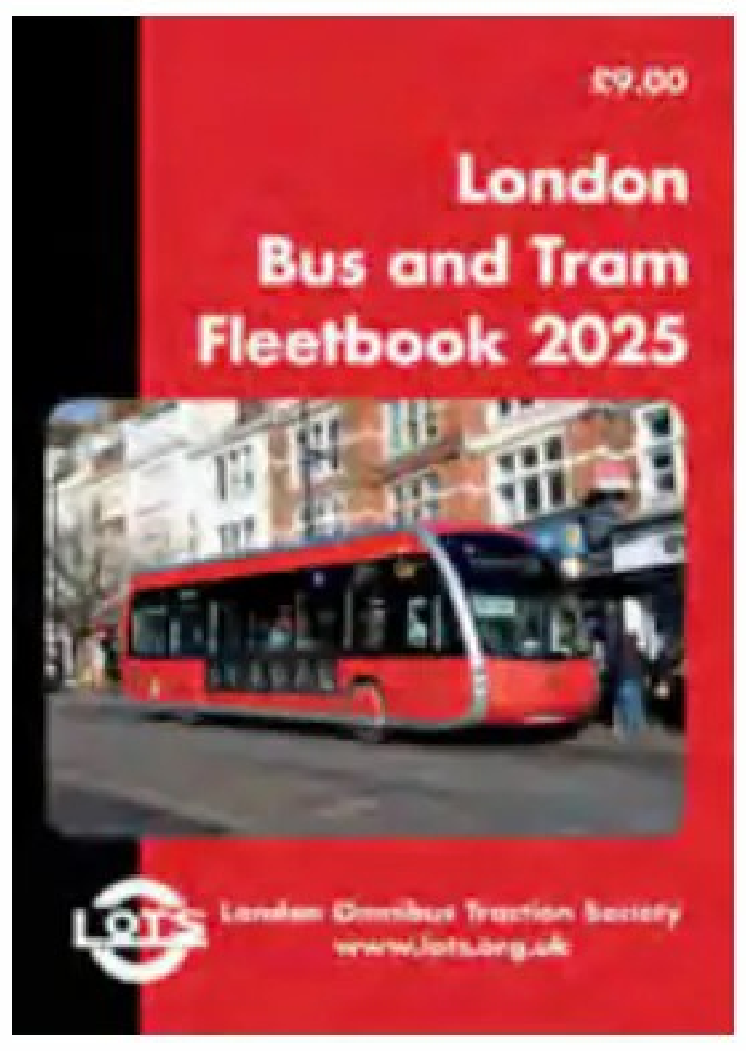

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- *NEW* - fully up-to-dated to March 2025, with vehicles listed from operators in London and the home counties; 128 pages with colour photographs.
£10.35 (£9.00 to members).

London Bus Review 2023

- the ***original*** review of the year for London's buses including the 'country' area of the Home Counties, with **full** details of the routes, vehicles, and operators, as well as the significant events that make up the story that was 2023; 80 pages.
£21.30 (£18.50 to members).

London Bus Magazine

(no. 213) - *NEW* - includes articles entitled *London Transport wartime and Merlins in Northern Ireland and interesting tangents*, as well as the gloriously illustrated *Around & About*, book reviews, letters and details of recent TfL service changes and tender awards.
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London Bus Garages

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Country Area Bus Route Directory – part 1: North and East

- *NEW* - (September 2025), with a full detailed list of all bus routes operated together with an overview of the operators.
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- *NEW* - (September 2025), with a full detailed list of all bus routes operated together with an overview of the operators.
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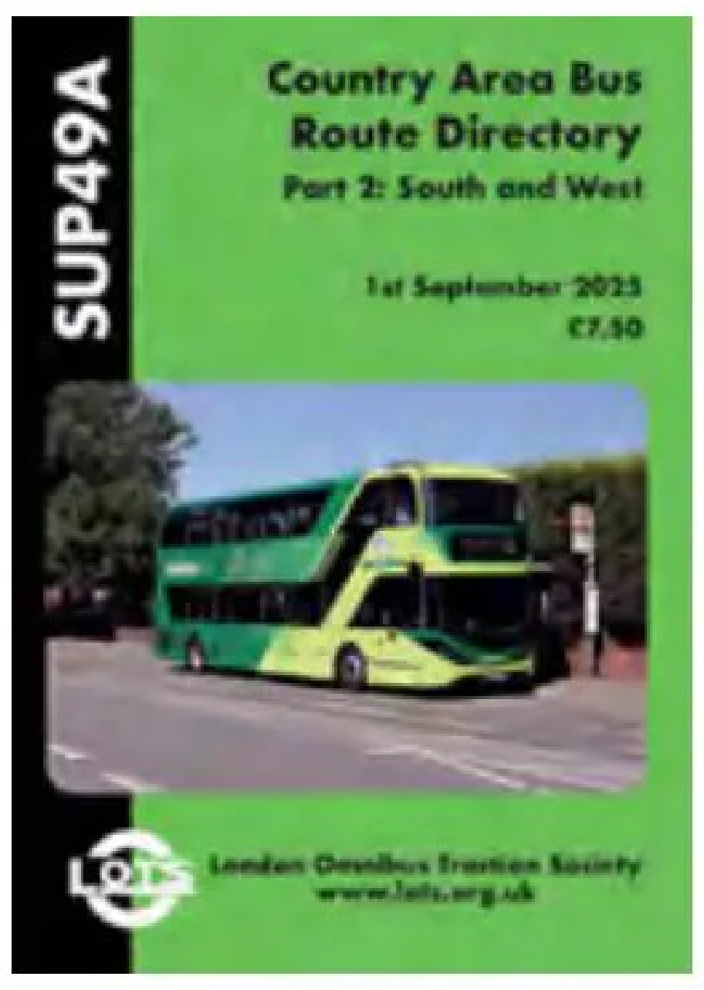

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Wright New Routemasters LT241/71/2 (LTZ 1241/71/2) from Stagecoach London.

Wright StreetDeck Electroliner 3110 (LV25 VPC) carries a Royal British Legion poppy appeal wrap.

Travelstar, Walsall
New in September was Scania K410CB6/Caetano Levante IIIA C55FLt NX75 TXE.

Trent Barton WG
Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC transferred from Kinchbus are B41F-seated 109/74 (YX17 NTK, YX20 OJS) in Mango livery and B39F-seated 128/46-57 (YX67 VFF, YX20 OHA-H/J-L/N) received in Skylink yellow.

Tri-axle Volvo B11R/Plaxton Elite 80 (YX65 ZHK) has passed to Stantons of Stoke, while fire damaged Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 125 (YX67 VFC) has gone for scrap.

Tyrer, Farnworth
Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC DY16 AXC (*DU61 FVY, LC61 WYN*) has been acquired, ex-Hammond, Nottingham, and re-registered TYR 31R.

Unicorn, Llay, Wrexham
C57F-seated Neoplan N2216/3SHDC Tourliner PN13 TFO has been acquired ex-Holmeswood Coaches. Tourliner MF11 LVR has been re-registered R19 UTW.

Weardale, Stanhope, Co. Durham
Acquired are B31F-seated Optare Solo M8900SR YJ14 BCO/U from Lloyds, Machynlleth, M16-seated Ford Transit WJ65 OUH from Cadet Force, South West England, H49/37F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC GH17 GTU (*MC17 HAM*) and B41F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC GE21 CPN (*DW21 HAM*) from Hams, Flimwell. However, the Enviro200 departed again in September.

Wright StreetLite WF MX12 CFY (*RIL 4396, MX12 CFY*) has been re-registered GO05 WMS.

Scania N230UD OmniCity double-decker W66 WMS reverted to original registration YT59 RXX in September before passing to Hornsby, Ashby. Also sold are Yutong GT12 M1 FXO, Dennis Trident/Plaxton President PJ02 RHF (*X6 WMS, PJ02 RHF*), Mercedes-Benz Vario O814D/Plaxton Beaver 2 SK52 XCZ (*T66 WMS, SK52 XCZ*), LDV Maxus PO58 SHJ, Optare Solo M9600SR YJ62 FXO (*AH06 BUS, YJ62 FXO*), Mercedes-Benz Atego 1021L/Unvi PO15 AZJ (*C6 WMS, PO15 AZJ*), Ford Transit WJ65 OUH, Yutong TC12 YC16 XAE and tri-axle Volvo B9TL/East Lancs Myllennium Nordic W666 WMS (*OU05 AVB*).

Westbus DG
New in July in Evan Evans livery were Iveco Daily 70C21H/Erener C29F 208/9 (RK25 ZMY/Z).

Scania K450EB6/Ayats Eclipse 198 (LJ19 CEL, *192 G 1178*) has been re-registered WE57 BUS.

Yorkshire Coastliner 2774 (BF63 HCP), a Wright Eclipse Gemini 2-bodied Volvo B9TL, has been given City Sightseeing livery for operation in York on inclement winter days. It undertakes other work, as here at Otley bus station on the Sundays-only Dalesbus 875 service linking Leeds, Grassington and Hawes. DANIEL STAZICKER

Mercedes-Benz Tourismo coaches 176/7 (BG65 VXE/F) were sold to Norfolk Coachways, Attleborough in August.

Wheelers Travel, North Baddesley, Hants
Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor C53FLt WD75 WTL was new in September.

Scania K320IB4/MOBIpeople Explorer HD22 FYU (*GB22 WTL*) has passed to Celtic Travel, Llanidloes, Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BN17 JVD (*N5 WTL, BN17 JVD*) to Portsmouth City Coaches, Havant.

Williams, Bala
Acquired are Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther C70F CC08 OXF ex-Lawrenson, Preston and Mercedes Benz Vario O814D/Autobus Classique Nouvelle 2 C33F AAZ 6220 ex-Llew Jones, Llanrwst.

Williams, Brecon
B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX25 OHE was new in August.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MX59 AVB has passed to A2B, Truro.

Yelloway, Chadderton, Gtr Manchester
Volvo B9TL/Optare Olympus GN07 WVA has been acquired, ex-Stott, Milnsbridge.

Contrary to last month's report, Alexander Dennis Enviro300 SN55 HSF has not joined this fleet.

Volvo B8R/Sunsundegui SJ66 LME (*M40 YEL*) has passed to 1st Choice, Llanelli.

York Pullman FG
Re-registered are Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 36166 (BD11 CFK) to LIG 5164, Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 37710/21/3/4/6 (YJ09 OBE/S/U/V/X) to NJZ 9182, CB08 YPB, EB58 YPB, DB08 YPB, RIL 5713, Ford Transit 54706 (YT16 VJU) to GB07 JDC and Mercedes-Benz Atego 1223L/Plaxton Cheetah XL 56602 (KE65 XHL, *SC65 SFC*) to 643 UXK.

TransBus Javelin/Plaxton Profile 21174 (GB03 JDC) reverted to original registration RX03 XKH when withdrawn in September.

Yorkshire Coastliner TD
Expanding last month's report, the application of red City Sightseeing livery to closed-top Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 2774 (BF63 HCP) allows its use on the York city tour in inclement winter weather, but it operates regular services at other times.

Mercedes-Benz Citaro hybrid 1513 (BV25 MDJ), in generic Transdev charcoal livery, has been transferred to The Harrogate Bus Company. Ex-Lothian Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2410 (SN57 GNO), acquired with the Reliance, Sutton-in-the-Forest bus operations earlier this year, has gone to The Keighley Bus Company.

Z&S, Aylesbury
Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 H39/27F BJ11 EAC, EBM were acquired from Faresaver, Chippenham in August.

ISLE OF MAN

Bus Vannin
Two of the six new Cummins-powered Wright StreetDeck Ultroliner double-deckers being delivered carry heritage liveries to mark the 50th anniversary of nationalised bus services on the Isle of Man in 2027. One is in Douglas Corporation yellow, the other Isle of Man Road Services red.

Acknowledgments Particular thanks are due, this month, to the following for your most welcome contributions to Fleet News by letter and by e-mail:

Mark Bailey, Stephen Barton, Philip Battersby, David Bell, Bus Lists on the Web, Cambridge Omnibus Society, Andrew Churchill, Matthew Cook, Crosville Enthusiasts Club, Paul Davies, Syd Eade, Eastern Transport Collection, David Ellis, Essex Bus Enthusiasts Group, Fylde Tramway Society, Joe Gornall, Greater Manchester Transport Society, Paul Green, Adrian Healey, Ivor Homfray, Ron Hughes, David Jenkins, Edward Joynes, Steven Knight, London Omnibus Traction Society, London's Transport Bus News, Chris Lowe, Mark Lyons, M&D and East Kent Bus Club, M&T News, Merseyside Bus Club, Metroline, David Mitchell, Ian Moorcroft, Simon Nicholas, Northern Group Enthusiasts Club, Deric Pemberton, Tim Phillips, PSV Circle, Ribble Enthusiasts Club, Reading Buses, Dave Robinson, Dave Russell, James Sadd, Paul Savage, Phil Shafe, Sheffield Omnibus Enthusiasts Society, Alan Snatt, Southdown Enthusiasts Club, Chris Staley, Daniel Stazicker, Jeff Tattersall, Nick Thomson, Steve Thompson, Transpire - The Chesterfield Bus Society, United Enthusiasts Club, Jeff Watson, Lewis, Welham, Welsh Bus News, Wessex Transport Society, West Yorkshire Metro Transport News, Wheels, Richard Whewell, John Whittingham, Charlie Williams, Yorkshire Bus News.

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YY18 TEU

Comprehensive service changes by Stagecoach East Scotland in late November bring both cuts and enhancements. Among the cuts is the withdrawal of most of the rural Fife section of the mainly hourly 65 (Perth-St Andrews) to operate only between Perth, Bridge of Earn and Newburgh, which is on the Fife side of the boundary with Perth & Kinross Council area. This October view shows Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 26114 (YY18 TEU) approaching Bridge of Earn. JOHN YOUNG

Stagecoach restructures from three companies to two

Stagecoach has merged its East Scotland and West Scotland businesses into a new Stagecoach South Scotland operating company,

This forms part of a wider plan, announced in early October, to reshape its operating company structure throughout Britain within the next few months. This is being implemented to take account of changes affecting the Stagecoach business, such as the development of franchising arrangements, which will have an impact on where and how the group operates.

The South Scotland operating company is being led by Fiona Doherty, managing director of West Scotland since April 2019. East Scotland operations director David Frenz was named interim MD there after Douglas Robertson, also in post since April 2019, left in April this year.

Rationalising their operating depots has condensed the size of the existing operating companies over time, notably in August this year when most West Scotland operations in Dumfries & Galloway were withdrawn with those remaining being operated from Cumbernauld and by Stagecoach Cumbria & North Lancashire from Carlisle. Stagecoach says the merger will enable it to focus its services throughout the central belt of Scotland within a single business unit, and drive consistency.

At present, East Scotland operates about 460 vehicles, from depots at Aberhill (84), Arbroath (48), Blairgowrie (24), Dunfermline (97), Glenrothes (66), Perth (83) and St Andrews (33), plus reserves, on the Fife Scottish Omnibuses operator licence. West Scotland, trading name of Western Buses, operates around 300 from Ardrossan (35), Arran (14), Ayr (63), Cumbernauld (57) and Kilmarnock (85), also plus reserves. The South Scotland company will therefore have a fleet strength of around 750. Ayr and Arbroath are over 130miles apart.

Lothian celebrates night services centenary

Lothian Buses marked the centenary of Edinburgh's night bus services with a campaign throughout October to celebrate the milestone, raise awareness of the network and pay tribute to those who ensure these services run smoothly.

Lothian's predecessor, Edinburgh Corporation, started two winter-only night services in October 1925 to cater for workers, operating Leith Walk-Bruntsfield and Salisbury Place-Ardmillan. These were extended by 1930 to Morningside Station and Balgreen Road, but their operation was suspended in wartime from 1939 to 1946.

A new five-route network covering more of the city was launched in 1947, with a sixth added in 1955, by which time the night services were carrying 400,000 passengers per annum. A revised network of five circular routes was started in 1960, and in 1983 that was modified to extend provision beyond the city boundary and to include weekend services – moving away from the concept of catering mainly for workers and recognising the need to serve Edinburgh's developing night life.

Deregulation resulted in both Lothian Region Transport and Eastern Scottish operating the night services between 1986 and 1989. Thereafter, it was Lothian alone with a mix of tendered and commercial services, and in 2002 the network was overhauled and branded NightBuses, with services extending as far as Balerno, Penicuik and Tranent. By 2007, annual patronage was over 750,000.

Further expansion took place in 2016 when East Coast Buses began night services to Dunbar and North Berwick, followed in 2018 by a Lothian Country service to Livingston. The network was suspended in 2020 with the imposition of Covid restrictions. Although recovery from that was slow, a record of well over 800,000 passengers were carried last year.

GROUP CODES

CG	Craig of Campbeltown
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
LB	Lothian Buses
MG	McGill's Bus Service
ST	Stagecoach Group

A June 2018 view of Borders Buses 11501 (SN15 LJF), an Alexander Dennis Enviro300, in Edinburgh on service 253 from Berwick-upon-Tweed, a sight no longer seen since October 20 when it was curtailed to operate only between Berwick and Dunbar. This 43-seater was new to Perrymans of Berwick, which Craig of Campbeltown acquired in 2016 and rebranded subsequently as Borders Buses. ALAN MILLAR

Where to send your reports ››››
Scottish reports should be sent, please, to:
Sandy Macdonald, 12 Morton Gardens, Maxwell Park, Glasgow, G41 4AF.
Email **scottishcolumn@gmail.com** to reach him by **December 19** for the **February issue**

Abbot, Loanhead

C63Ft-seated Scania K410EB6 Interlink tri-axle YT19 DYX joined this fleet in September ex-Premier, Luton.

Ace Travel, Airdrie

Irmaos Mota-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi L26 ACE (*YN66 EKX, L25 AMC, YN66 EKX*) regained its original registration in September.

Caetano Levante-bodied Scania K410EB6 tri-axle BU18 OSO was sold to Drew Wilson (dealer), Carluke in August.

Anderson, Langholm

M14-seated LDV Max BU07 KDX was acquired in February ex-Royal Air Cadets (1359 Squadron), Beeston.

Olympus-bodied Iveco Daily 35.12 MV55 CUW was sold for scrap in November last year.

BARC Coach Hire, Innerleithen

Irizar Century C51Ft-bodied Scania K360IB4 YN15 ENF (*555 JXT, YN15 ENF*) joined this fleet in August 2024 ex-Jones Executive, Manchester.

Bay Travel, Lochgelly

New B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs YX75 LCJ/K/M/N were delivered in October when Alexander Dennis Enviro100EV demonstrator AD24 ADL was on loan for a spell.

Blue Bus, Shotts

Mellor-bodied Iveco Daily 70C17 BT66 HJO passed to Gough, Carluke in September. A new licence authorisation of 16 vehicles was approved in October.

Borders Buses CG

From October 20, service 253 between Berwick-upon-Tweed and Edinburgh was curtailed to operate only between Berwick and Dunbar. The company says this change was made to address growing traffic congestion and a lack of demand for direct travel between Dunbar and Edinburgh, both of which had affected the reliability of the service. Arrangements have been made with East Coast Buses for reliable connections to be made in Dunbar with its service X7 (Dunbar-Edinburgh) and through ticketing has been introduced between these two services. Earlier and later journeys on service 253 have been started, including a 19:10 journey from Berwick to Reston, to enhance connections with train services at Reston station, opened in May 2022.

The fleet strength in September was 102, including one vehicle off the road (SORN), two driver trainers and eight others withdrawn. The 91 were split between Galashiels depot (54) and Berwick-upon-Tweed (37).

Brownrigg, Thornhill

Further to the November issue, RK75 XCE is a Ferqui C33F-bodied Iveco Daily 70C21H new in September.

Swestrans-owned VDL Midcity-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 513CDi 916 (FJ15 CWR) returned to its owner in May.

Canavan, Cumbernauld

Tuesday to Friday journeys between 11:00 and 15:00 on Strathclyde Partnership for Transport MyBus service M90 (Cumbernauld area) have been registered to operate from August 31 until January 31 next year.

City Circle, Newbridge

Irizar i6S-bodied Scania K450CB6 tri-axle 126 (YT23 BVM) passed to Johnston, Armitage in April and similar K410EB6 169 (YT19 EFE) reached Blake, East Anstey in August.

Coast to Coast, Ardrossan

M16-seated Ford Transit WA12 LYS joined this fleet in October last year ex-Deeper Life Bible Church, Leeds. Other acquisitions earlier this year were C53Ft-seated VDL Futura FHD2-139 KC16 ABC ex-Cousins, Stanway in March; Jonckheere C49Ft-seated Volvo B10M-62 W682 FRN (*00 KY 4025*) ex-Walls, Higher Ince in June; and C49Ft-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BN17 JCX ex-Alfa, Euxton 103 in September.

W682 FRN did not stay long and was sold to Drew Wilson (dealer), Carluke in September. Ford Transit BK67 UGY, reported last month as arriving in June, moved on later that month to Raynor, Esh Winning and Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BV71 HYZ passed to Bodyshop Edinburgh, Kirknewton in July.

DA Travel, Kilphedar, South Uist

The two new Mercedes-Benz Tourismos mentioned last month are BV75 HRW/X, both C55FL and new in September. Two new Ferqui-bodied Mercedes-Benz minibuses are due to arrive in January.

Ford Transit BG24 VLF was sold to M4 Minibus Centre (dealer), Swindon in July; Mercedes-Benz Tourismos BV22 WSW/Y were acquired by Dickinson, Wrangle and KTL Coaches, Watford respectively in September.

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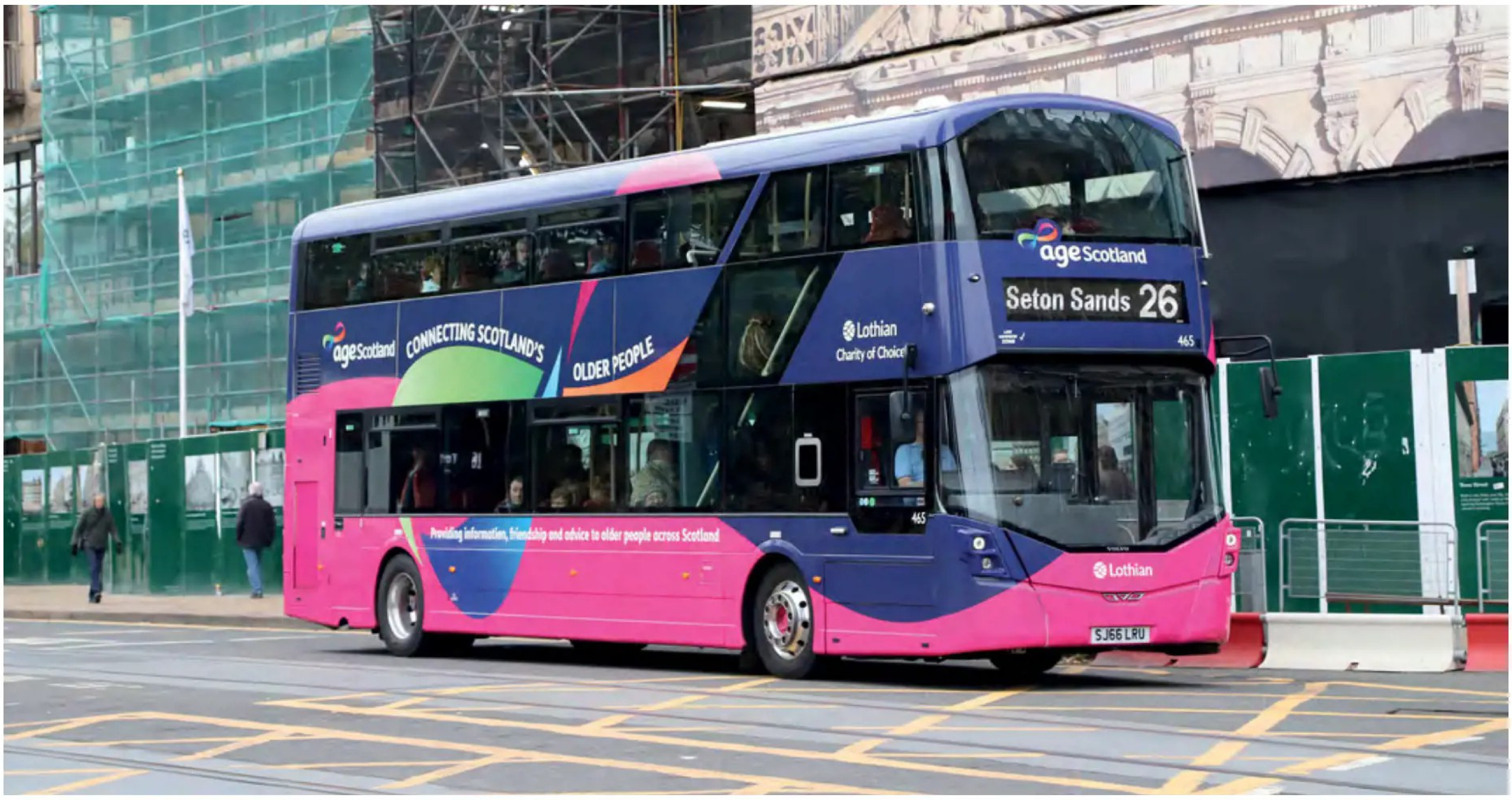
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465
SJ66 LRU

As reported in July Fleet News, Lothian Buses 465 (SJ66 LRU), a Wright Gemini 3-bodied Volvo B5TL, has been given this livery to promote Age Scotland, the council-owned company's charity of choice for 2025. ANDY RIGBY

D&E Coaches, Inverness
C53FL-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BV75 HRD was new in September.

Similar BF61 HBY (*S1 YST, BF61 HBY, W9 AOW, BF61 HBY*) was acquired by Portsmouth City Coaches, Havant in August.

Deveron, Macduff
C53FLt-seated Yutong GT12 SH25 ARO was new in June.

Discover Scotland Tours, Glasgow Airport
EVM M16-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi minicoaches GX25 BVN/O were new in March.

Similar Sprinter 516CDi RF19 VAA was acquired by AtoZ, London in July.

Doig, Glasgow
Higer Touring-bodied Scania K360EB4 YT19 DZY was acquired by Aston, Earls Croome in June.

Durness Bus
Volkswagen Transporter minibus SY20 YUP (*S800 TDB*) was sold in August.

East Coast Buses LB
Wright Gemini 3 H49/22F-bodied Volvo B5TL 506 (SF17 VPE) was transferred to this fleet from Lothian Buses in September, in East Coast Buses livery.

Wright Eclipse Gemini 2-bodied Volvo B9TL 933 (SN09 CVU) moved in the opposite direction in May; similar 938 (SN10 DKF) moved to Lothian Country in August, followed by 937/9 (SN10 DKE/J) in September.

Edinburgh Coach Lines
Mercedes-Benz Tourismo M PSU 698 (*BF16 XRN*) was in allover white, ex-Shearings livery, by September.

Irizar i6-bodied Scania K410EB6 tri-axles 809-11 (PSU 617-9, *YR17 RHA/E/F*) regained their original registrations in January and May (809), and Jonckheere JHV-bodied Volvo B11R PSU 613 (*BT63 UVG*) did likewise in August.

Ember Core, Dundee
New service E8 (Glasgow-Inverness) started on October 22, with intermediate stops at Dunblane, Perth, Pitlochry, Dalwhinnie and Aviemore; 12 return journeys are offered, each day of the week.

First Bus Aberdeen FG
BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV City 38406/7/9/11/2 (LC71 ESG/N/V, ETA/D) were received on loan from First Bus Glasgow for approximately one week in early September.

Mercedes-Benz O530G bendybuses 11106/10 (BG58 OMA/E) were acquired by Orkney Transport, Stromness in April.

First Bus Glasgow FG
Wright Eclipse Gemini-bodied Volvo B9TL 37191 (WLT 677, *SF07 FCG*) regained its original registration in September.

BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV City 38406/7/9/11/2 (LC71 ESG/N/V, ETA/D) were loaned to First Bus Aberdeen for approximately one week in early September.

Enviro400EV City 38444/58 have received red overall advertising wraps for Lotto, the latter having previously carried Channel 5 NFL Big Game Night advertising for a brief period. Similar 38457 has received a further revision to its White Fox boutique wrap.

BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro200EV 64120 lost its service 9/A branding earlier this year.

Recent recipients of First Bus livery include Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs 33214/64, 33397, 33406/8/9/31/40, 34363/72; Alexander Dennis Enviro400 33916; BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV City 38474/82; Alexander Dennis Enviro200 44462; Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs 44678, 67028/31/62/71/83; Wright StreetLite DF 47394; Wright StreetLite Max 63099, 63109/10/87/99, 63201/8/15/8; and Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 67718/22/33/67/71/89, 67822/42/6/50/62/71/89. Of these, 67718/22/33/67, 67850 previously had purple fronts and The One branding; 67842 had a purple front and service 201 branding.

The fleet strength in September was 696 including ten buses out of service (SORN), 13 reserves, 16 driver trainers and 18 withdrawn. The operational fleet of 639 was split between Caledonia depot (283), Scotstoun (147), Blantyre (110), Overtown (56) and Dumbarton 43.

Free the Coo, Edinburgh
C37F-seated Yutong TC9 midicoach SH25 ATU was new in July, and similar SG23 OUC passed to Rooney Coach Hire, Hilltown in August.

Garelochhead Coaches
Plaxton Panther-bodied Volvo B9R EU60 PZZ (*E9 GHC, EU60 PZZ, B20 DWA*) was acquired by Eurocoach, Dungannon in June.

Hire Society, East Kilbride
C53FLt-seated Mercedes-Benz Tourismo BV75 HAS was new in September. A new 15-vehicle licence authorisation was approved in October.

Houston, Lockerbie
Mellor Strata B21F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 515CDi minibuses WR25 AZL/N were new in July and B40F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YW25 DCF followed in August.

JMB Travel, Newmains
Two new MCV EvoRa B46F-bodied Volvo B8RLEs were delivered in October as replacements for the shorter B38F-seated ones currently used on the Glasgow Fast X1 service, as increased capacity is needed.

Wright Eclipse Gemini-bodied Volvo B9TLs MXZ 1751/2/4/6/7/60 (*SN57 DDK/L/*

McGill's has been evaluating Yutong U11DD electric double-decker 8611 (SG25 JJL) from its Xplore Dundee fleet on the Clyde Flyer services between Glasgow and Largs, currently operated with diesel-engined Mercedes-Benz Citaro single-deckers. It was photographed in Greenock. SCOTT HUTCHISON

U/X/Y, DFA) were acquired in September ex-Lothian Country 841/2/4/6/7/50; the first to enter service in October was MXZ 1757.

B43F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC demonstrator YY25 DKX was on loan for the first week of September.

Plaxton Profile-bodied Volvo B7R SP06 FVC (*SSA 8X, SP06 FVC*) was acquired by Chambers, Langley in March. Bova Futura FHD12-340 RG03 BVU (*X90 OXF, RG03 BVU, C8 OXF, CW52 TOP, NDZ 70, WA03 UDZ*) and Plaxton Paragon-bodied Volvo B12M WK03 EKX were sold to Drew Wilson (dealer), Carluke in August.

Johnstone and Area Community Transport

This organisation's operator licence was revoked without a public inquiry in October.

JP Coaches, Forfar

B34F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX70 OHS joined the fleet by September ex-Hulleys, Baslow 2. A further addition in September was M13-seated Mercedes-Benz City 45 BP14 FKJ (*B14 CBC, BP14 FKJ*) ex-ARG Travel, Coatbridge.

Temsa Safari HD XIL 65 (*YJ60 GKE*) regained its original registration in August before sale to Drew Wilson (dealer), Carluke and subsequent export to Cyprus in September.

Kevin's Coaches, Wishaw

Mercedes-Benz Tourino BX07 NKE (*D4 HCT, BX07 NKE, V33 AAC, BX07 NKE, S4 EOT, BX07 NKE, WET 476, BX07 NKE*) was exported to Africa in November last year.

Loch Lomond Bus Services MG

In September, this 64-vehicle coach fleet was distributed between Inchinnan (24), Livingston (22) and Johnstone (18) depots.

Lothian LB

Further new MCV-bodied Volvo BZL electric double-deckers in service by October were 764/5/7/74e (SF75 VXR/S/U, VYB).

Wright Eclipse Gemini-bodied Volvo B9TL 400 was given a mainly dark grey overall advertising livery for Medik8 Collagen Power Cream in September.

The Bright Bus name disappears from Edinburgh following withdrawal of the Airport Express service of McGill's Scotland East on November 14. It was operated mainly by ex-First Bus Alexander Dennis Enviro300s like 8478 (SN62 AOC) in a livery based on the shade of orange known in the 1980s and 1990s as 'Strathclyde Red'. Bright Bus sightseeing tours were rebranded last summer as Big Bus Edinburgh. ALAN MILLAR

Lothian Country Buses LB

Wright Eclipse Gemini 2 H44/29F-bodied Volvo B9TLs 937-9 (SN10 DKE/F/J) were transferred to this fleet from East Coast Buses in August (938) and September.

Similar 841/2/4/6/7/50 (MXZ *1751/2/4/6/7/60, SN57 DDK/L/U/X/Y, DFA*) were sold to JMB Travel, Newmains in September.

McCall, Lockerbie

Jonckheere C70F-bodied Volvo B12B PO59 OEE (*5129 UA, 6 SVK, PO59 OEE*) joined this fleet in August 2024 ex-The Travellers Choice, Carnforth.

B32F-seated Optare Solo M8900SR KY63 VTC was acquired from Houston, Lockerbie by February, and Mellor Strata B27F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 515CDi WV74 VZO arrived on loan from Dumfries & Galloway Council in September.

Van Hool Alizée-bodied Volvo B10M-62 BEZ 3135 (*T900 MEC, BEZ 3135, T587 DGD, NIW 252, T587 DGD, VIL 1533, T587 DGD, FPN 259, T587 DGD, 2 RWM*) reverted to T587 DGD in August, allowing PO59 OEE to become BEZ 3135 then.

Optare Versa V1100 YJ60 KHD was sold for scrap in July and Wright Eclipse-bodied Volvo B7RLE SN58 BYS passed to Central Coaches, Melton Mowbray in July.

McColl's, Dumbarton

Operation of the summer season Trossachs Explorer service ceased at the end of the contract period on October 5, having achieved a 15% increase in passenger numbers to over 6,000 compared to the initial service trialled in 2024. As a result, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority, which secures the service, intends to arrange for a similar facility to operate next summer.

McGill's MG

Wright Eclipse 2 B44F-bodied Volvo B7RLE 2236 (SF11 CWR) was received from Midland Bluebird in July,

Alexander Dennis Enviro100EV demonstrator AD24 BUS was on loan at Inchinnan depot in October and used on services 14 (Rutherglen-Fernhill), 757 (Paisley-Clydebank). Xplore Dundee's Yutong U11DD double-decker 8611 (SG25 JJL) was also on loan in October but at Greenock depot and used on Clyde Flyer services.

The operational fleet strength in September was 200, split between Johnstone (75 vehicles), Inchinnan (63) and Greenock (62) depots; in addition, there were 41 withdrawn vehicles, ten in reserve, three driver trainers, two preserved buses and one off the road (SORN).

McGill's Scotland East MG

Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLE 2277 (SK57 ADV) was sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet in September.

At that time, there were 26 of this company's vehicles allocated to Livingston depot (fleetnumbers 0411, 0422, 0449, 2904-9, 8477-81/3-6/95, 8928/30/1/3-5/51) and nine withdrawn vehicles (0468, 0600, 2293, 8923/9/32, 9900-2). In addition, the 13-vehicle Prentice Westwood fleet is also based at Livingston, together with a share of the Loch Lomond Bus Services coach operation.

GROUP CODES

CG	Craig of Campbeltown
DG	Comfort Delgro
FG	FirstGroup
LB	Lothian Buses
MG	McGill's Bus Service
ST	Stagecoach Group

The Bright Bus Airport Express service between Edinburgh Airport and Waverley Bridge, started in January 2024 to compete with Lothian's Airlink 100 service and Edinburgh Trams, was withdrawn from November 14. Initially, it was to have ended on December 3, but the date was advanced at the suggestion of City of Edinburgh Council which was closing Waverley Bridge to buses once again from November 15, in line with its earlier intention to do so on a permanent basis.

Mackie, Alloa
VDL Futura FHD2-129 YK15 OKF (*BU54 ACS, YK15 OKF, BU55 TMC, YK15 OKF*) became 490 SVX in July.

Mayne, Buckie
Beulas Cygnus-bodied MAN 19.360 SV18 KPB (*N99 GSM*) passed to McGonagle, Buncrana in August.

Midland Bluebird MG
More of the new Yutong E12 single-deckers in service from Larbert depot by October were 5093, 5101/7/8/10-5 (SJ75 XNY, XOG/O/P/S-X).

Wright Eclipse Urban-bodied Volvo B7RLE 2286 (SN57 JCZ) and Wright Pulsar-bodied VDL SB200 6003 (YJ09 CVL) were sold to Ensign (dealer), Purfleet in September.

At that time, the three depots at Larbert, Bannockburn and Balfron had vehicle allocations of 82, 47 and seven respectively. Those at Larbert comprised Wright StreetLites 0406/7/9/20/30/40-3/6/8/80/1; Volvo B7RLEs 2231-5/7, 2415/7; Volvo B7TLs 2828/30/3/8/40-2; Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs 4105-8, 4200-3/10-3; Yutong E12s 5086-92/4/6-8, 5100/2/3/7/8/11/3; Alexander Dennis Enviro200s 8000/4-10/24-6/41/4; Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs 8942/4/9/50; and Alexander Dennis Enviro400s 8966-72. Bannockburn's allocation was Wright StreetLites 0423/6-8/31/3/9/50-2/5/8/61/2/5/6/78; Volvo B7R/Plaxton Profile 0601/5; Volvo B7RLEs 2419-21/3; Volvo B7TLs 2808/9/53/64; Volvo B9TLs 2900/2/3; Mercedes-Benz Citaro O295s 3360-3; Alexander Dennis Enviro200 8055; Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 8489/91; Alexander Dennis Enviro400 8926; and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs 8936-8/40/1/3/6-8. The Balfron fleet comprised Volvo B7R/Plaxton Profile 0604/6; Mercedes-Benz Citaro O295s 3331/56/7; Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 8496; and Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMC 8945.

In addition to these, there was one bus in reserve (2901) and 31 withdrawn (0408/29/32/45/64/7/71, 1603, 1820, 2230/8/9/55/8, 2303, 2810/51/2/4/66, 3358, 4111/8, 4486, 8050/1/3, 8475/6/93/4).

Miller, Airdrie
Van Hool Alizée-bodied Volvo B12M WA54 HXV was sold to Drew Wilson (dealer), Carluke in September.

Millport Motors
Caetano Levante-bodied Volvo B11R tri-axle BV66 WPP was acquired by Berwyn, Trefor in August.

Mitchell, Plean
Sunsundegui Sideral C53Ft-bodied Volvo B9R BX12 CVA arrived in June ex-Myles, Plean.

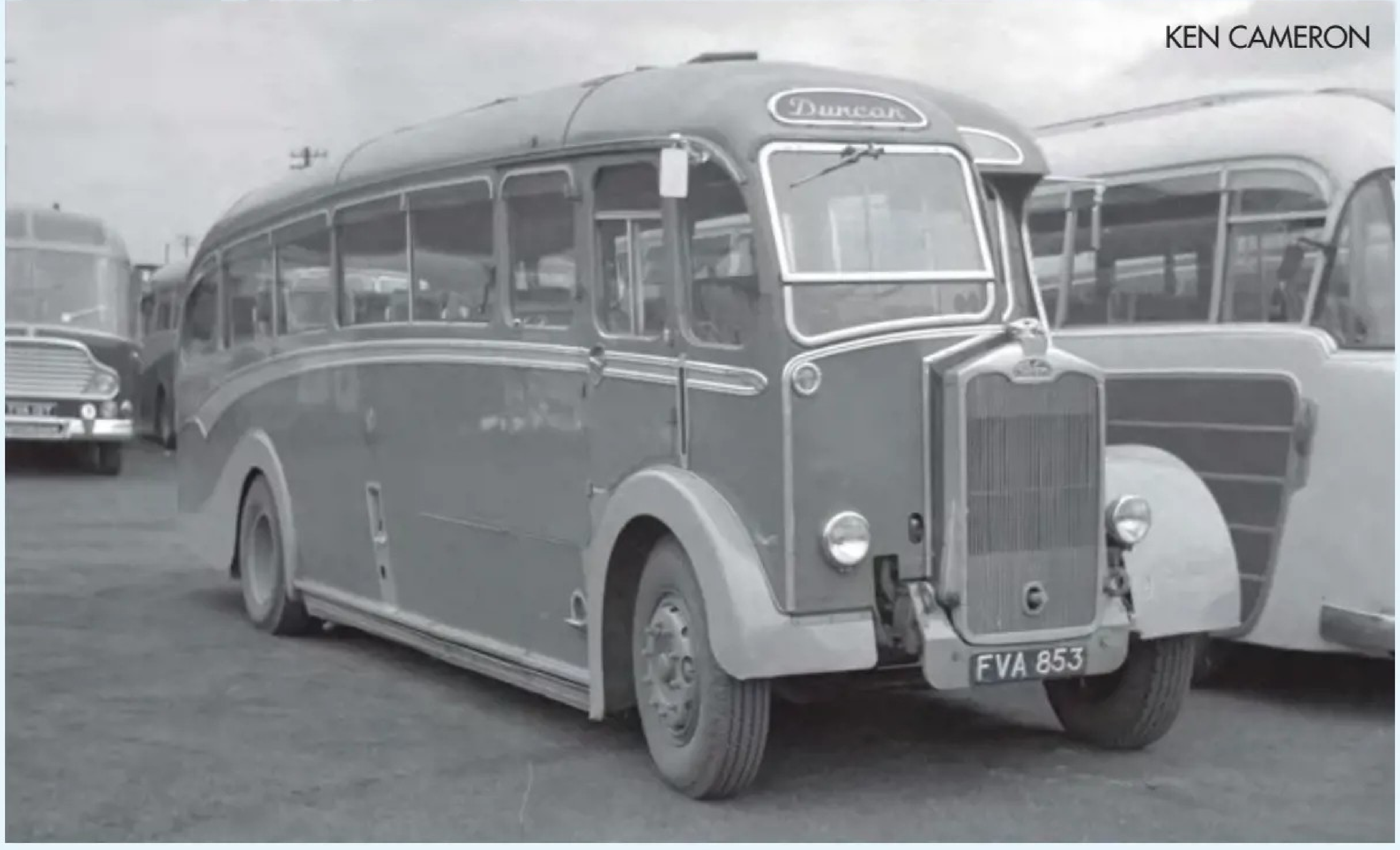
CAMERON'S CAMERA

FVA 853, which Ken Cameron photographed in a parking area at Meadowbank in Edinburgh in April 1959, was a long-lost sister of a coach in private preservation for the past 59 years.

It was one of three Albion Valiant CX39 halfcabs with 33-seat Duple A-series bodies new to Hutchison's of Overtown in 1950 and kept there for three years. This one was intended for Scot's Gray Coaches of Clackmannan, to be registered SL 3453. It was delivered to Hutchison's in June 1950 along with similar FVA 854, arriving two months after FVA 704.

FVA 853 remained in Lanarkshire, sold to Duncan of Motherwell who retained it for ten years after which it was probably scrapped. FVA 704 went to Murray's of Stranraer and returned to Lanarkshire in 1966 with a building contractor in Airdrie.

Today's survivor is FVA 854, which after being sold to a Westmorland operator, returned to Lanarkshire by 1961, joining other Albions with Carmichael's Highland fleet at Glenboig. It was owned briefly by Alexander (Midland) when it acquired Carmichael's business in 1966 and since January 1967 has been in the care of the Albion Vehicle Preservation Trust, painted in red and cream Western SMT livery since 1982.


KEN CAMERON

Order of Malta/WAVE, Stirling
Treka B16FL-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 514CDi EO17 MVM was acquired in January 2024 ex-East Renfrewshire Council and similar Sprinter 513CDi KX15 OYY, PSO arrived in May this year ex-Neath Port Talbot Council 274/3.

Treka-bodied Sprinter 516CDi R16 DAB (*CE12 CNU*) and 513CDi FN62 AVJ were offered for sale at Morris Leslie (auction), Errol in August.

Orkney Transport, Stromness
Unvi C43F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Atego 1524L TFZ 5304 and C49Ft-seated Van Hool TX15 Alicron S15 JDO (*YJ12 CGO*) were acquired in March ex-A1, Methil and Ogden, St Helens respectively. April arrivals comprised MOBIpeople Midi Explorer C29F-bodied MAN TGL10.220 PO16 HSN ex-Reays, Wigton and AB51D-seated Mercedes-Benz Citaro O530G bendybuses BG58 OMA/E ex-First Bus Aberdeen 11106/10.

Park's, Hamilton
EVM C19F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi SN75 OEV was new in September.

Similar LSK 503 was re-registered SE23 TYB before passing to Tay County Travel, Dundee in September. Plaxton Panorama-bodied Volvo B11RLE tri-axle SC69 XGN (*HSK 651*) passed to Miller Brothers, Littleport in July and similar SC69 XJT (*HSK 660*) was sold to Volvo (dealer), Coventry in September.

Prentice Westwood MG
Temsa Safari HD13 0800 (RPP 734, *YJ24 AYC*) and Irizar i6 integral 0802 (YT70 EWP, *570 PRR, YSV 771, YT70 EWP*) regained their original registrations by September.

Radical Travel, Edinburgh
Paramount-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi SN15 CBV was acquired by Winton, Port Glasgow in May.

Ratho Coaches, Newbridge
Unvi M16-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi SL75 BDE and C53FL-seated Irizar i6 integral YN75 ZXH were new in September.

Short, Forfar
Former Fishers Tours, Dundee Plaxton Panther C57FL-bodied Volvo B12M ASZ 3947 (*SF06 WDX, 525 XPD, SF06 WDX, KSK 977*) was acquired in June.

Shuttle Buses, Kilwinning
Mellor Strata B21F-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 516CDi PK20 BUS/Z were acquired from Pilkington Buses, Accrington in September.

Optare Solo M780SE 110 (M1 BUS, *YJ09 OUP*) reverted to YJ09 OUP in September.

Stagecoach East Scotland ST
More MCV-bodied Volvo BZL single-deckers in service by September were B41F-seated 76129-31/7 (SF75 WAE/J/O, SF25 YKM) in steel blue livery, and B38F-seated 76144-8 (SF25 YKX, SF75 VZM/L, SF25 YLA/B) in Jet 747 magenta and white.

The latest repaints into steel blue include Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs

Ratho Coaches YN25 XJO, a 42-seat 10.9m Higer Touring-bodied Scania K360CB4 new in April, in Threlkeld in the Lake District. JOHN YOUNG

10673/5/6/8-83, 11185/6; Alexander Dennis Enviro400-bodied Scania N230UDs 15625/35; Alexander Dennis Enviro400s 19368, 19634/63; Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs 26013-6; Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 27117/9-21/35/8; Optare Solo M800SLs 48151/4-7; similar Solo M8570SR 48215; Volvo B13RLE 9700DD tri-axle 50537; and Plaxton Panther LE-bodied Volvo B8RLE tri-axle 54521.

Stagecoach North Scotland **ST**

Alexander Dennis Enviro300 B43F-bodied Scania K230UBs 28690-2/5 (YN64 AHC-E/J) arrived from Stagecoach West Scotland by October.

Steel blue livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro400 MMCs 10895, 11782; Alexander Dennis Enviro300s 27801, 28691; Plaxton Elite-i-bodied Volvo B11R tri-axle 54290; and BYD/Alexander Dennis Enviro400EV 84062; 28691 may have arrived in it.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300-bodied Scania K230UB 28644 (SV12 AZO) was scrapped in August, when Plaxton Panther-bodied Volvo B12Bs 53107 (SP08 FUV, BSK 744, SP08 FUV), 53110 (SV09 EGE, LSK 545, SV09 EGE), 53112 (SV09 EGJ, ESK 983, SV09 EGJ) and Plaxton Elite i-bodied Volvo B11R tri-axle 54243 (YX65 ZKO) also left the fleet.

Stagecoach West Scotland **ST**

New B39F-seated Yutong E12s 73191-4 (YK75 LCM-P) entered service from Kilmarnock depot on service 4 (Kilmarnock-Glasgow) in September in local livery. It is anticipated that they will move to Stagecoach North East in due course.

Steel blue livery has been applied to Alexander Dennis Enviro400s 19265/6; Alexander Dennis Enviro300-bodied Scania K230UB 28703; Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC 37482; and Plaxton Elite-bodied Volvo B9R 53710.

Alexander Dennis Enviro300-bodied Scania K230UBs 28690-2/5 (YN64 AHC-E/J) moved to Stagecoach North Scotland by October, when Alexander Dennis Enviro300 27885 (SF13 FNM) and Plaxton Elite-bodied Volvo B9R 53712 (YN60 ABX) went to Stagecoach South West and Stagecoach South Wales respectively.

Stuart, Carluke

Plaxton Elite C48Ft-bodied Volvo B9R LRZ 5963 (*OU10 GYO*) was acquired in June ex-Fishers Tours, Dundee.

Plaxton Panther-bodied Volvo B12B 9878 HP (*WM04 PHK*) reverted to WM04 PHK in August.

Telford, Newcastleton

M16-seated Ford Transit YS21 NUO arrived in May 2024 ex-Mayday, Croydon.

Temporal Travel, Greenock

C55FLt-seated Neoplan N2216/3SHDC470 Tourliner TT75 TTL was new in September.

Acquired then were C49Ft-seated Setra S415GT-HD PV55 MWO (*AGZ 5274, PV55 MWO, MHZ 9210, PV55 MWO, 188 TAE, CL03 AND*) ex-McGough, Newmains and Plaxton Paragon C57F-bodied Volvo B12M YN06 RWK (*P400 ABY, YN06 RWK*) ex-Abbey Coaches, Glasgow. PV55 MWO was re-registered R14 TTL when it arrived.

Berkhof Axial-bodied Volvo B10M-62 R985 PMO (*5226 PH, R985 PMO*) passed to Clarke, Gourock in September.

West Coast Motors **CG**

Fleet strength in September was 200, including 18 withdrawn vehicles, five off the road and one reserve. The 176-strong operational fleet was distributed between eight locations comprising Glasgow South Street (39 vehicles), Glasgow Charles Street (35), Oban (26), Dunoon (19), Ardrishaig (16), Campbeltown (16), Mull (16) and Bute (nine).

Whyte, Newmachar

VDL Futura FHD2 SD63 HNW passed to Dewar, Falkirk in August.

Woods, Tillicoultry

M11-seated Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 517CDi SK25 WRD was new in June.

Xplore Dundee **MG**

Yutong U11DD double-decker 8611 was loaned to McGill's during October.

Yule, Pitlochry

B30F-seated Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMC YX75 LCA was new in October.

Alexander Dennis Enviro200 YX18 KUO was acquired by Faresaver, Chippenham in September.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

C Morrison, B Nicol, S Oliver, PSV Circle, Shuttle Buses, J Sinclair, R Walter and J Young have supplied news items this month. Their assistance is gratefully acknowledged.

GROUP CODES

CG Craig of Campbeltown

DG Comfort Delgro

FG FirstGroup

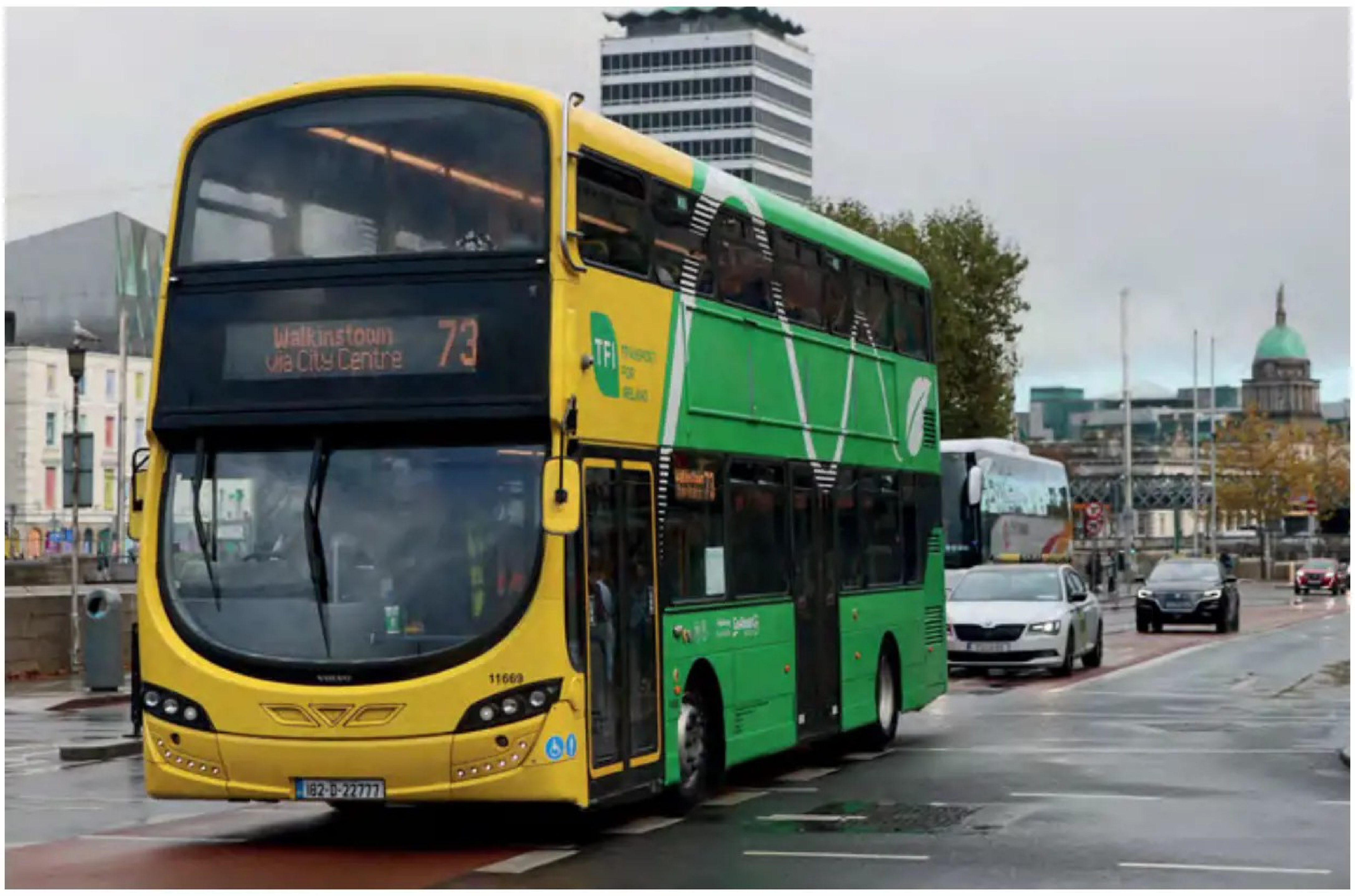
LB Lothian Buses

MG McGill's Bus Service

ST Stagecoach Group

Stagecoach East Scotland has electrified its Jet 747 service between west Fife and Edinburgh Airport, replacing Alexander Dennis Enviro200 MMCs with six MCV-bodied Volvo BZLs including 76148 (SF25 YLB), photographed at Halbeath park-&-ride. These are 38-seaters with internal luggage racks. ALAN MILLAR

Where to send your reports »»
Send your reports on Northern Ireland operators to: **Paul Savage** by e-mail to: **paul1629@hotmail.com** And the Republic operators to: **Ian Molloy, Willow Grove, Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock, Co Dublin,** or by e-mail to: **ianmolloy30@gmail.com**



Go-Ahead Ireland began operating a cross-city Dublin city route for the first time with the introduction on October 19 of new route 73 on which Wright Gemini 3-bodied Volvo B5TL 11669 (182 D 22777) was photographed on the first week. It was originally Dublin Bus SG473. Go-Ahead has operated commuter services from surrounding towns into Dublin for some time. DARREN HALL

TRANSLINK

Ulsterbus

Newtownards-based Wright StreetDeck 3107 (JGZ 3107) returned to service in September, 11 months after it left the road at Ballyblack and overturned into a field. It was officially recorded as withdrawn at the end of February but has been repaired.

Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 911/2/8/22 (LFZ 2911, KFZ 9912/8, LFZ 2922) were transferred from Metro in August/September and allocated initially to Larne (911/2), Dungannon and Coleraine, respectively; 911 was moved on quickly to Coleraine. During October, similar 910 (KFZ 9910) took up duty at Ballymena and Volvo B5TL/Wright Gemini 3 2130 (FGZ 3130) went to Omagh.

Scania K320IB4/Irizar i4 1060 (LFZ 9160) lost Goldline livery in October for bus blue/grey.

The allover wrap for The Open golf on Wright StreetDeck 3193 (XUI 8193) having been removed, was replaced immediately with a lime green one featuring the winners of a Translink children's art competition on the environment.

Volvo B12B/Sunsundegui Sideral 1782 (REZ 9782) was transferred from the Metro reserve in September for use by the Ulsterbus training school.

Placed in reserve at the end of September were Scania K230UB/Wright Solar Rural 412/29 (UEZ 2412/29) and Volvo B7RLE/Alexander Dennis Enviro300 Rural 513/27 (VEZ 3513/27).

Scania K230UB/Wright Solar Rural 423/35 (UEZ 2423/35) were withdrawn in September with mechanical defects.

Metro

Optare Versa V1170 1808 (TFZ 8808) was returned to service in October after almost 18 months out of use.

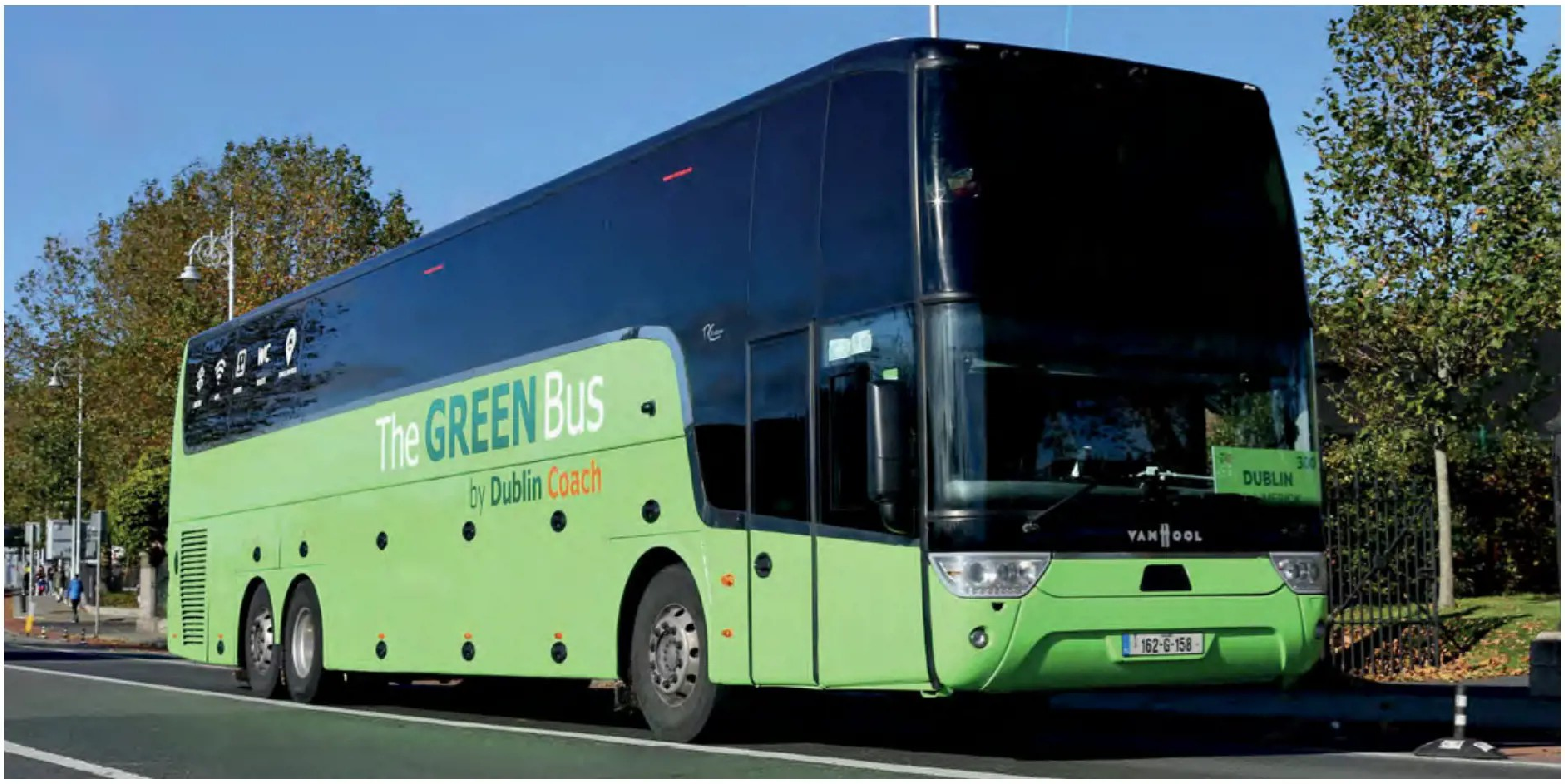
Transferred to Ulsterbus were Volvo B7RLE/Wright Eclipse 2 918 (KFZ 9918), 911/2/22 (LFZ 2911, KFZ 9912, LFZ 2922) in September, 910 (KFZ 9910) and Volvo B5TL/Wright Gemini 3 2130 (FGZ 3130) in October, when 2131/2 (FGZ 3131/2) were being prepared for transfer. Also transferred in September, for the training school, was Volvo B12B/Sunsundegui Sideral 1782 (REZ 9782). Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini 2336 (SEZ 2336) passed to Hamill, Ahoghill (dealer) as scrap in September.

CORAS IOMPAIR ÉIREANN

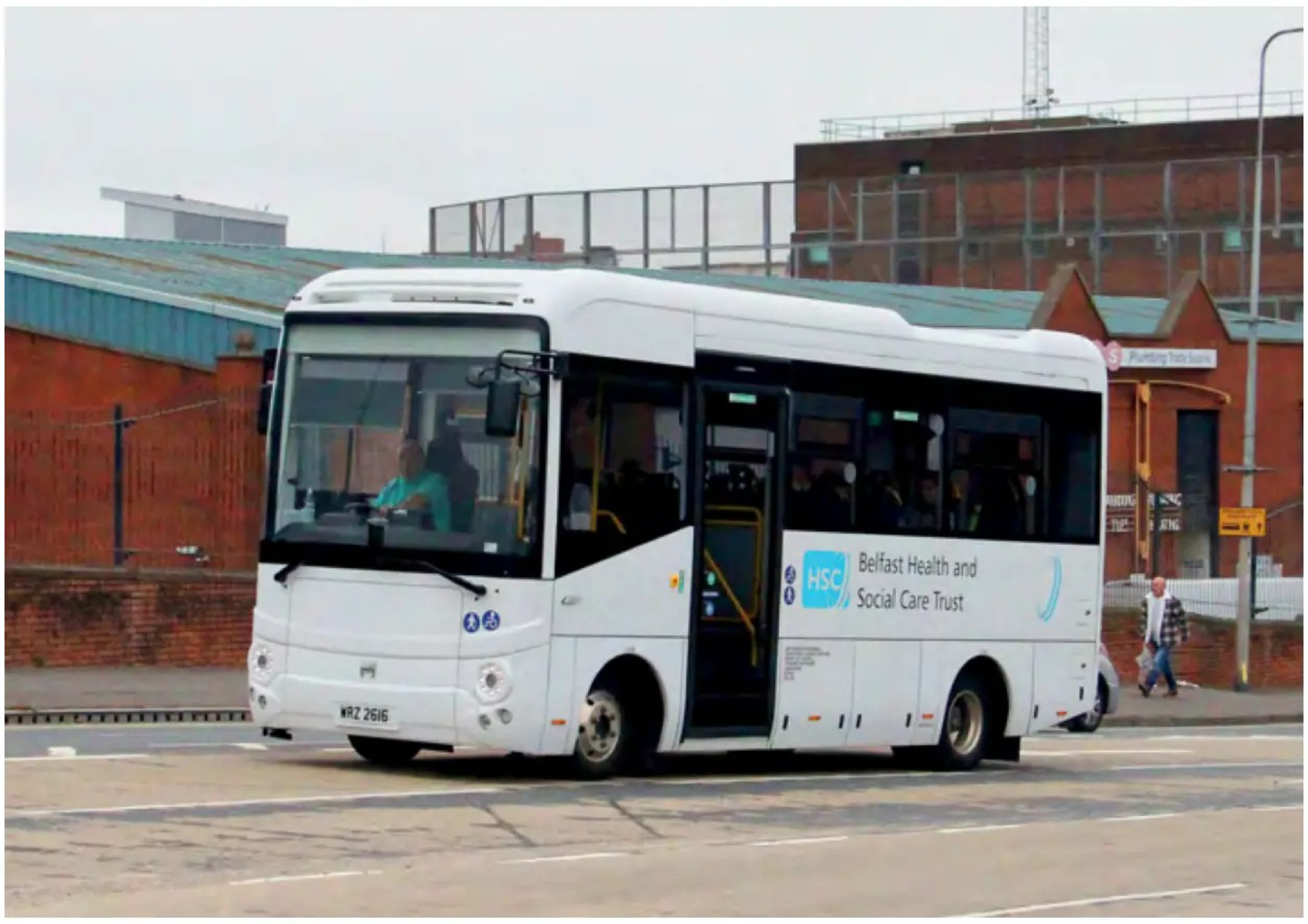
Dublin Bus

As anticipated last month, phase 7 of the Bus Connects network revision was implemented on October 19 when existing routes 9, 26, 40/B, 49, 54A, 83/A, 123 and 140 ceased, the 40 to Finglas having existed for almost 100 years. Dublin Bus is operating new routes 23 (Charlestown Shopping Centre-Merrion Square), 24 (Dublin Airport-Merrion Square), 80 (Liffey Valley-Palmerston Park), 82 (Irishtown-Kiltipper) F1 (Ballymun-Tallaght), F2 (Charlestown Shopping Centre-Rossmore), F3 (Charlestown Shopping Centre-Limekiln Avenue), L89 (Toberburr-Broombridge Luas), were launched. The 80, F1 and F2 are 24hr services. In the south of the city centre, the 23, F1, F2 and F3 are the first services provided along Cuffe Street, west of St Stephen's Green. Phase 7 triggered some re-balancing of fleet allocations among garages, the most pronounced being into Jamestown Road.

The future of Volvo B9TL/Wright Eclipse Gemini GT88 (132 D 1724) is in doubt after a spectacular collision near Mount Street bridge



Callinan 162 G 158, a Van Hool TDX21 inter-deck, in new The Green Bus by Dublin Coach livery. DARREN HALL



Belfast Health & Social Care Trust WRZ 2616 is one of at least three 16-seat Mellor Sigma 7 electric minibuses built by Wisdom Motor in China. PAUL SAVAGE

on September 28 when a fire appliance struck it at speed in the centre nearside.

Bus Éireann

CIÉ-bodied 1961 Leyland Leopard L2 heritage bus E14 (CZA 674) was moved on October 18 from Broadstone to Dundalk. The footprint it previously occupied at Broadstone, together with surrounding space, is expected to become the new Dublin Bus head office.

Following Commercial Vehicle Roadworthiness Testing expiry, Thurles-based Scania K114EB/Irizar PB SP17 (05 D 30068) became only the third of the 30-strong 2005 intake of these coaches to be withdrawn. We understand that its engine is being donated to similar SP86 (06 D 54790).

Further Wright StreetLite DFs reallocated to Bernard Kavanagh are WM426/7 (191 D 35753/6).

OTHER OPERATORS

Allen's Tours, Belfast

Volvo B9TL/East Lancs Visionaire 4 (LJ07 XES) overturned into a field when it was blown off the road during Storm Amy on October 3.

Belfast Bus Company

Volvo B7TL/Alexander ALX400 BGZ 1237 (*01 D 70163*), Volvo B12B/Plaxton Panther YN07 NUB and UVM-bodied Mercedes-Benz Sprinter 515CDi WX56 WVO passed to Leonard, Armagh (dealer) by August.

Belfast City Sightseeing

PO41/22D-seated Scania N230UD OmniCity has entered service still with www.citysightseeingglasgow.co.uk web address and with plain City Sightseeing fleetname following removal of the Glasgow name and lower panel graphics.

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust

B16F-seated Mellor Sigma 7 electric minibus WRZ 2613, first registered in November 2024, is a third example of this type here, joining similar WRZ 2615/6.

Bus Feda, Ranafast, Co. Donegal

New in August was Volvo B8R/MCV EvoTor coach 252 DL 330.

Callinan, Claregalway

The PSV Circle reports that C49Ft-seated Van Hool T16 Alicron 251 G 4038, 4103/93 were new in June, followed in July by CH63/3Ft-seated Van Hool TDX21 Altano inter-decks 252 G 17/8, 20-2/4/6.

TDX21 Altano 162 G 158 is one of the first recipients of a new The Green Bus by Dublin Coach livery following Callinan's recent acquisition of the Dublin Coach business. It was previously in Citylink blue and yellow.

Causeway, Ballymoney, Co. Antrim

Mercedes-Benz Atego 1524L/Unvi C41F WA14 CNE (*S26 SAX, WA14 CNE*) was acquired in August. It was last recorded with C&S Coaches, Nelson and was new to McComb, Belfast.

Coach Connections, Portaferry, Co. Down

Volvo B12M/Jonckheere L15 GWY (*SF06 VYV, HSK 656*) was re-registered JSZ 6093 in August. Volvo B12M/Jonckheere Mistral 50 ESZ 8334 (*DEZ 5555, FCZ 707, FN04 JZH*) was sold to preservationist Phill McAlinney, Newtownards in September.

EI Travel Group, Dublin

This operator has taken delivery of Scania K-series/Irizar i6S 251 D 40694 and Temsa MD9 midicoach 252 D 210.

Fureys, Sligo

A new dual-door Erduman Turas-bodied DAF midicoach for this fleet, with low-entry rear overhang, was exhibited at Busworld Europe in Brussels in October.

Giles, Millisle, Co. Down

The first new Van Hool T16 coach for the UK is reported to be coming here. A second has also been ordered for 2026 along with examples of the new VDL Futura FHD3 in 2027.

Go-Ahead Ireland GA

New route 73 (Kilmanagh Road-Griffith Avenue East), this operator's first Dublin city route across the city centre, was introduced on October 19 as part of Bus Connects phase 7. It replaces Dublin Bus route 123 (Walkinstown-Marino) but differs by serving instead serves Gardiner Street and Burgh Quay rather than O'Connell Street nor Dame Street.

Bernard Kavanagh, Urlingford, Co. Kilkenny

Further B32F-seated Wright StreetLite DF coming from Bus Éireann for town service work are 191 D 35753/6.

Paul Nash Travel, Claregalway

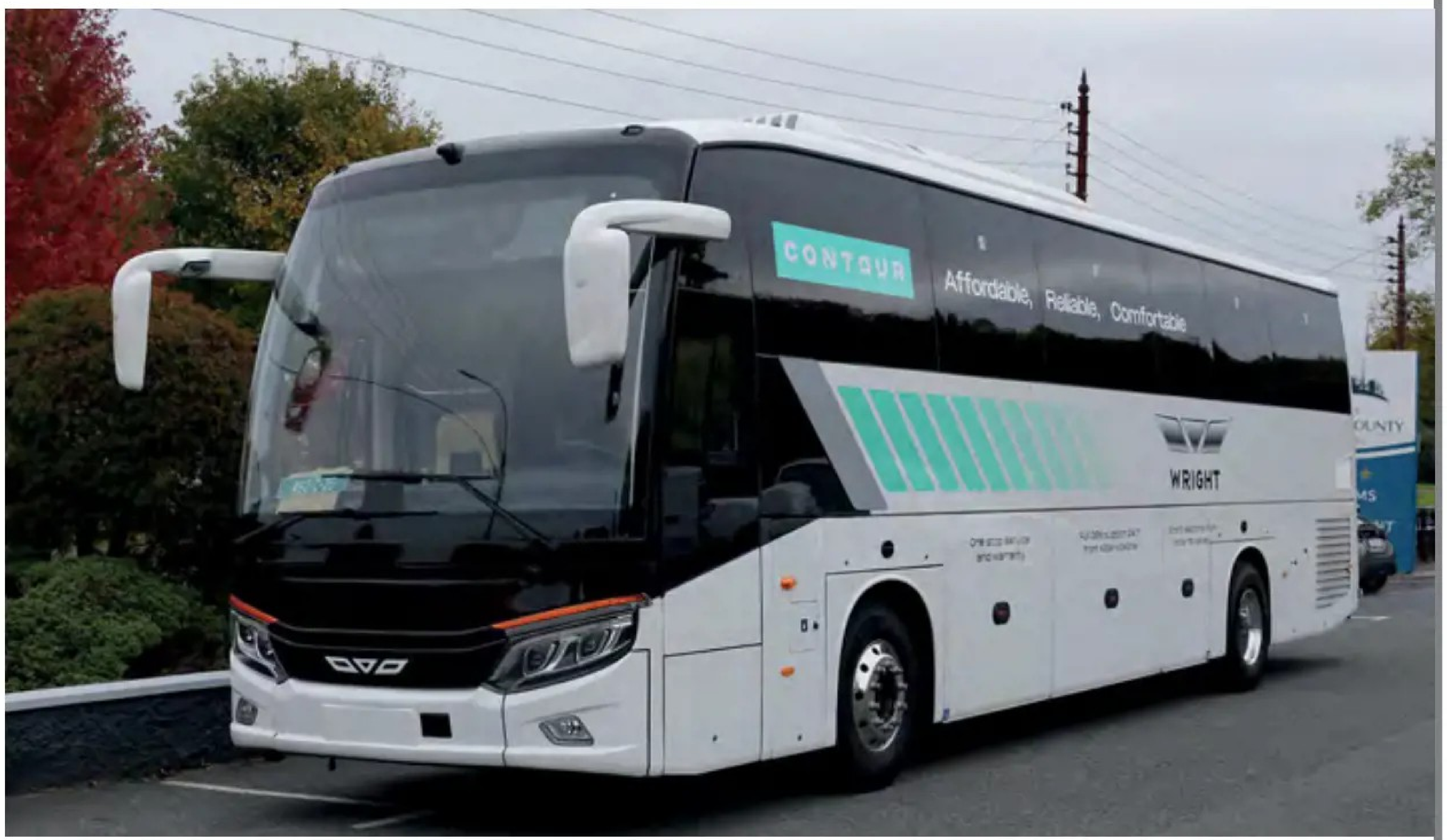
Former Stagecoach South Wales CN61 FBE, a CH63/24Dt-seated Van Hool TD927 Astromega, has been acquired and awaits a 121 G registration.

Paddywagon, Annascaul, Co. Kerry

Further to July Fleet News, CH61/35Dt-seated VDL Synergy SDD141 coach WJ65 EKR, acquired ex-Barnes, Swindon, has been re-registered 152 KY 2157.

Eamonn Rooney, Hilltown, Co. Down

Further to last month's report, the information on the ex-Ministry of Defence Volvo B9R/Plaxton Panther are C53F-seated LA13 TVK, TPZ (*RK13 BYU, FE13 FOD*) and C57F-seated LA13 TTV, TVZ, TWE/F (*VO13 AED, AE13 EYU, OU13 CXH, LK13 AOC*).



Wrightbus demonstrated this left-hand-drive King Long-based Wright Contour coach, running on trade plates, to operators across Ireland between October 13 and 16, including in Dublin, Cork, Killarney, Limerick and Galway. DARREN HALL

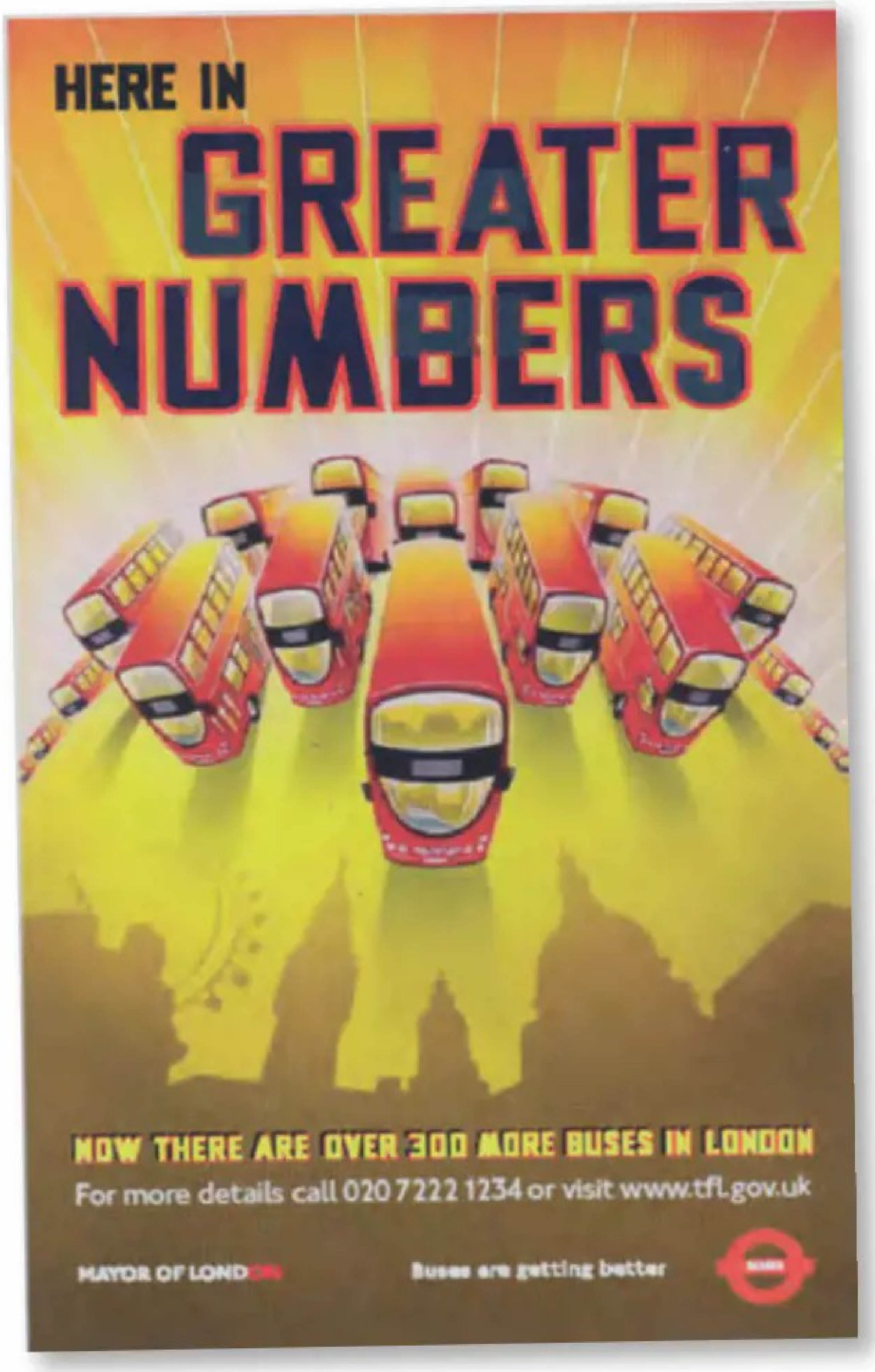
BENDYBUSES, BORIS AND KEN

Title:	Regenerating London's Buses
Author:	Roger Torode
Publisher:	Capital Transport
ISBN:	978-1-85414-498-0
Specification:	280mm x 220mm, 192pp, hardback
Price:	£35

Two revelations in this lavishly illustrated account of the first 16 years of Transport for London (TfL) and the first two elected mayors concern the Mercedes-Benz bendybuses introduced by Ken Livingstone in 2002 and removed by Boris Johnson who promised that in his successful 2008 election manifesto.

The first routes to gain them were the former Red Arrow 507 and 521 radiating from Waterloo; they also were the first to lose them, in July 2009, when 45 lower capacity rigid Citaros replaced 28 bendies. It was TfL's democratic duty to implement the mayors' policies.

Mike Weston, latterly operations director at London Buses, has an anecdote from the 2009 change. "There was a launch at the Mandela Way bus depot and Boris turned up on his bike. His press officer called me over and said, 'Can you explain to Boris why we're getting rid of the articulated buses?'. And I felt like saying, 'Well, I don't know why you're getting rid of them'. So, I had to make up three or four reasons why we were getting rid of them and Boris went on TV and press interviews and repeated them all."


HERE IN
GREATER
NUMBERS
NOW THERE ARE OVER 300 MORE BUSES IN LONDON
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MAYOR OF LONDON
Buses are getting better

Weston believes they could have survived on those two routes, which played a unique role in transporting rail commuters in peak travel hours, had their contracts not been the first to come up for renewal after the 2008 election. "If we'd got rid of some of the other routes first, I reckon that they could have survived."

The other revelation is of a plan to convert some of them into 12m or shorter rigids. While most operators leased their Citaros and left the leasing companies with the headache of finding new uses for them, Arriva purchased its bendies and came up with what former London managing director Mark Yexley says was the 'Cut and Shut Project' to weld the back end of the rear section on to the back of the front section and keep most of the leftover bits as spare parts. Wrightbus was prepared to do the work, provided at least 50 buses were to be converted.

"The problem with this plan was that it needed the cooperation of Mercedes to change the engine management system coding, because the software was set up for three doors, three axles and a turntable," says Yexley.

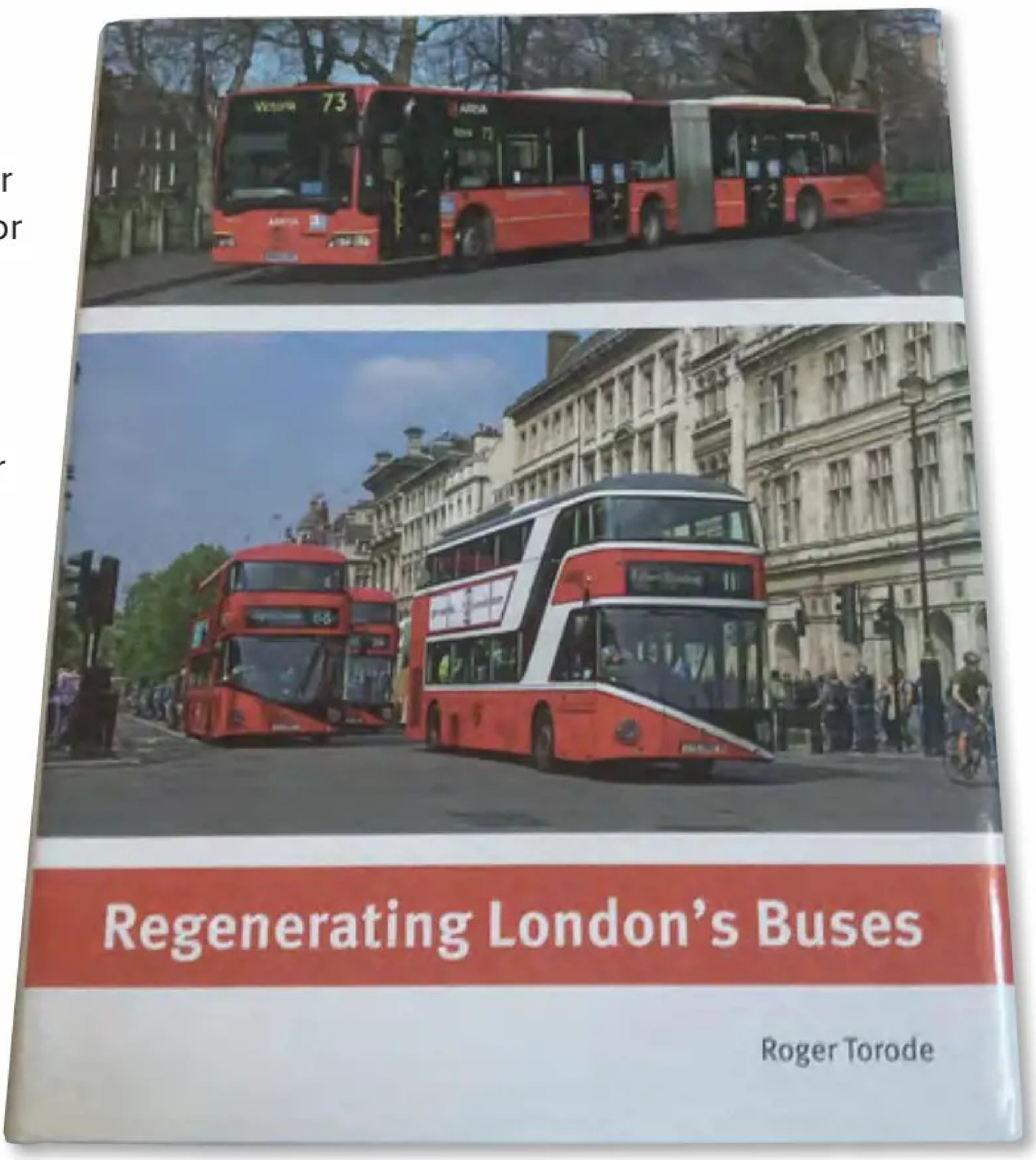
"In response, Mercedes initially threatened legal action in a not very customer-focused way. They were concerned about product liability in the future, but finally they said that Arriva could make these changes, but Mercedes would not assist in any way and would require every Mercedes reference or badge to be removed from the vehicles so that the bus would no longer be a Mercedes product."

Arriva ploughed on, confident that the Mercedes coding could be cracked with the assistance of a vehicle engineer who helped the army assess captured enemy tanks and a company that experienced similar issues when converting large saloon cars into hearses.

It learned later that Dawsongroup considered doing something similar with some of the leased bendies that had fallen back into its hands, but Arriva concluded eventually that it could not justify the cost of conversion, given the likely residual value of the rebuilt buses.

Ironically, salvation came from Germany, as state-owned Deutsche Bahn wrote off the book value of the Citaros after it bought Arriva in 2010 in a defensive move to stop any of the French groups from making the acquisition. Eighty-five of them went to Malta when Arriva took over bus operations there the following year.

Torode tells these and many other stories within the much bigger context of how both mayors recognised that an enhanced bus service would help London function for the benefit of its growing population, of how TfL worked with them to make that happen, increasing ridership by an astonishing 69% to 2.4billion journeys and the peak vehicle requirement by nearly 50% from 5,446 to 8,145. As if that was not enough, there was a public transport system to organise for the 2012 summer Olympics and the shock and trauma of the July 2005 terrorist attacks.



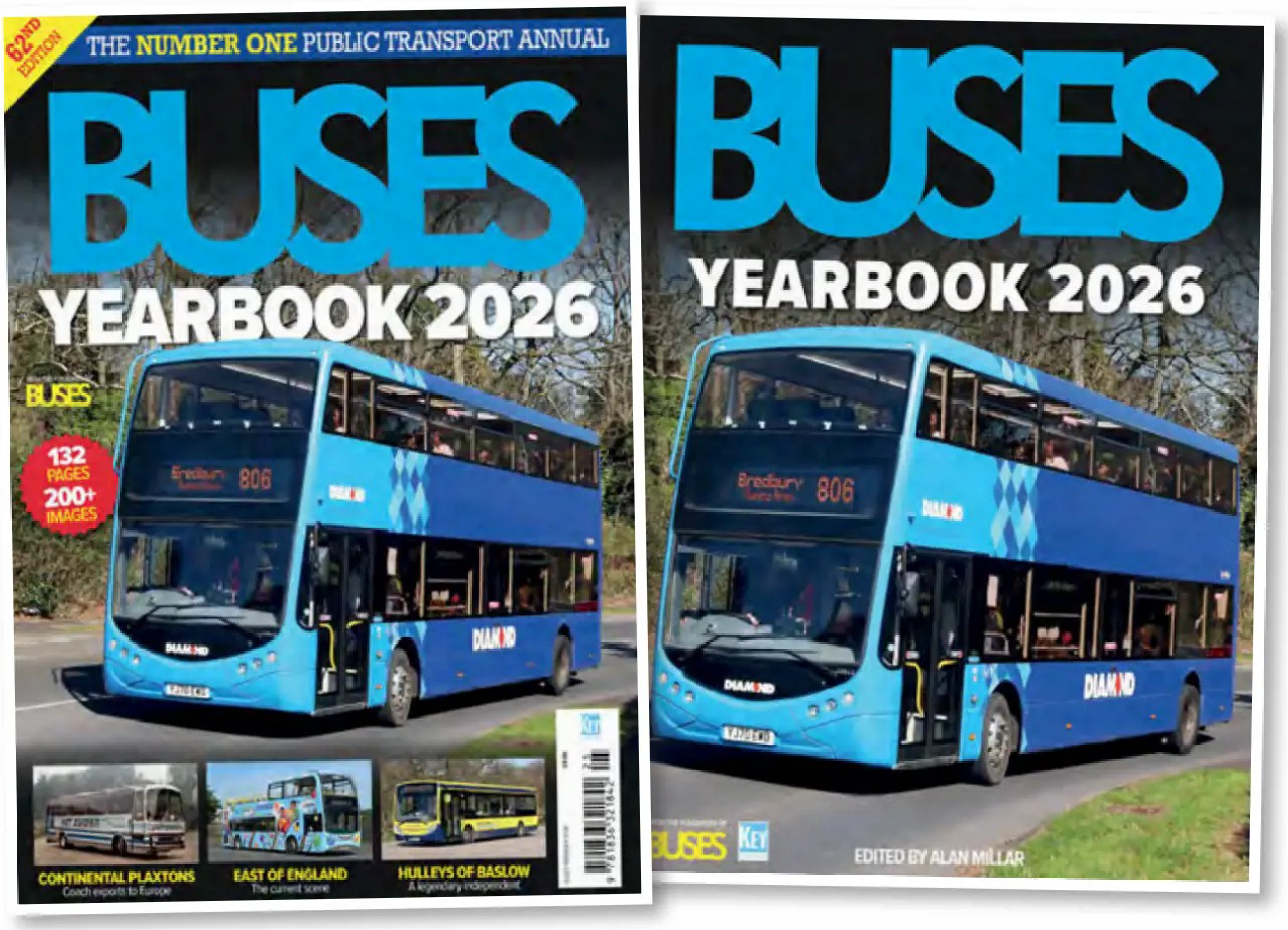
Besides bendybuses, the Routemaster fleet was augmented with secondhand examples refurbished (not particularly well, we learn towards the end of the book) and then replaced by modern low-floor vehicles when Livingstone was persuaded that they needed to go, the New Routemaster was fashioned to combine Johnson's desire for an open rear platform with wider operational requirements, fare collection went cashless and accelerated the roll-out of contactless payments, and first hybrid then electric vehicles drove down emissions.

As in *Privatising London's Buses* (Reviews, March 2016 *Buses*), Torode tells much of this story through the words of key people. These include former TfL commissioner Lord (Peter) Hendy who also provides a foreword and has choice words to say about planning colleagues' failure to anticipate and mitigate the impact that the ultimately stillborn West London and Cross River street-running tram projects would have had on other traffic, residents and businesses.

Torode's conclusion, and that of key witnesses including Steve Norris, Livingstone's Conservative challenger in 2000 and 2004 who became a TfL board member, is that Livingstone was the visionary and politically braver of the two mayors, with the courage to introduce the congestion charge, while Johnson bought into the vision and retained the TfL professionals who delivered it. **AM**

HATS, PUNCHES AND ROADS: LIFE AT THE SHARP END

Title:	Buses Yearbook 2026
Editor:	Alan Millar
Publisher:	Key Publishing
ISBN:	978-1-83632-178-1
Specification:	245mm x 175mm, 130pp, hardback
Price:	£19.99
ISBN:	978-1-83632-184-2
Specification:	295mm x 210mm, 132pp, softback
Price:	£11.99



As the leaves turn from green to brown, we can be sure it is time for *Buses Yearbook*, and here it is again, a potpourri with surely something to interest everyone, available in traditional hardback form and as a softbound A4 bookazine.

With 1986 marking the 40th anniversary of deregulation, editor Alan Millar has chosen this as a recurring theme across some features, including his own authoritative piece on the history of Optare over that same period.

Similarly, Gavin Booth looks back at 40 years of rear-engined double-deckers, highlighting in particular bodywork styling changes over time. Describing initial attempts as bland, he reminds us of the distinct types that emerged for some customers in the 1960s, such as Bolton, Liverpool and Manchester, and how Optare's Spectra influenced contemporary alternatives from Alexander and Northern Counties. And perhaps more poignantly, how many of the manufacturers and bodybuilders have fallen by the wayside.

Some of these feature in Peter Rowlands's look at buses and coaches whose bodies are close imitations of another manufacturer's product. Alexander's class-leading A-type was one such, with similar offerings from MCW and Northern Counties, while much later, he reminds us that East Lancs built a passable representation of an R-type too.

For a look at something familiar but different, Mike Fenton has turned his attention to left-hand-drive Plaxtons, whose reach into Europe was perhaps farther than many of us would have guessed. On a similar tack — but in right-hand-drive form — is David Longbottom's survey of Maltese coaches of recent years.

Still abroad, jobbing musician Laurence Knight shares with us some of his finds as his cruise ship-based work lands him in various ports around Europe and America. Among the local buses and trams, he inevitably encounters a Routemaster, albeit one loading via the emergency exit.

Explaining exactly how much influence one person can have on bus operations, Andrew Babbs charts the career of municipal manager Albert Burrows. His desire to introduce driver-only buses left a legacy of mainly dual-door single-deckers at all the fleets he managed and culminated in the conversion to dual-door of a portion of Liverpool's double-deck stock. His final job, as director general of Merseyside PTE, was cut short by his untimely death at the age of 53.

The influence of individuals is also brought to the fore by David Toy, whose inside knowledge as a senior engineer in the Scottish Bus Group brings a personal touch to the story of SBG vehicle buying policy, principally between 1981 and 1985. Stuart Emmett looks at the heating and ventilation system developed by Professor Cave-Browne-Cave, most familiar on the Bristol Lodekka, but as Stuart explains, fitted to other vehicles too. For most operators though, its advantages — including a cleaner interior — were outweighed by the scope for water leaks, and drivers had to follow complicated procedures. Ironically, it was a technological advance that resolved the problems for the Guy Wulfrunian.

Of course, *Buses Yearbook* is replete with photographic features. One reminds us that bendybuses existed beyond Sheffield and London, while that from John Robinson shows some of the operators that served Merseyside after deregulation. Howard Berry selects some less familiar vehicles to have carried National Express's white livery, and Mark Bailey's camera has captured some of the current East Anglian scene.

John Whiteing goes farther back for a trip around north Wales, Terry Blackman illustrates Epsom Derby Days in the 1980s and 1990s *(pictured)*, while Chris Drew shares the stories associated with each of his carefully selected photos from the London area, and Bob Hind adds words to a ride around Thomas Hardy's Dorset.

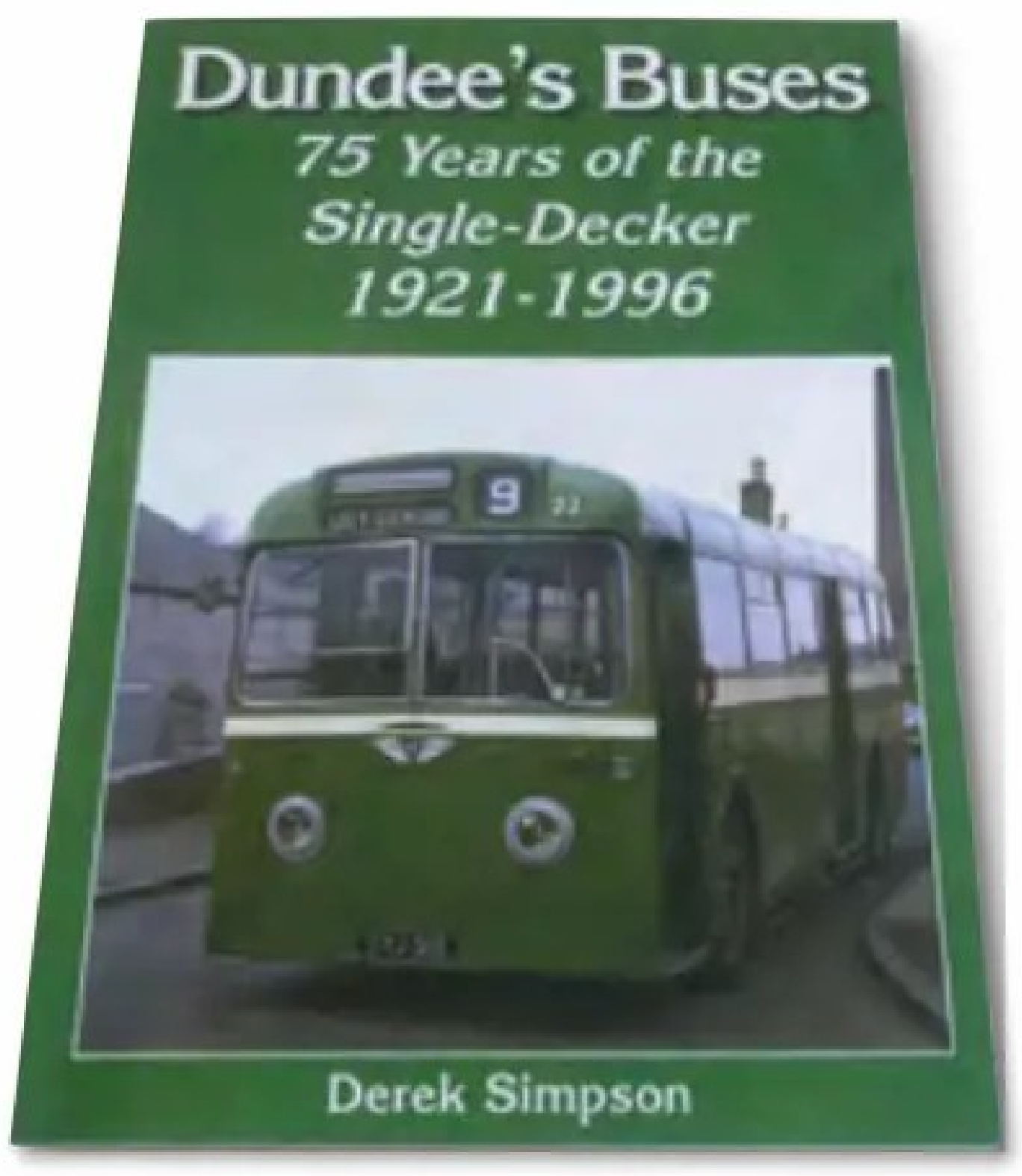
Back on the deregulation theme, Mike Greenwood charts South Yorkshire's rocky journey towards that event in October 1986, and some of the competition that sprang up afterwards. The Sheffield of an earlier generation is remembered fondly by Les Dickinson, while there is another connection to the city in John Young's history of the recently-failed business of Hulleys of Baslow.

Many a *Buses Yearbook* and its predecessor *Annual* has contained contributions from Michael Dryhurst, his first in 1977. But the photo feature on Massey will be his last, for as *Buses* recorded last month, he died not long before the book went to press.

And to make a splash at the end, Daniel Stazicker finds not one but two operators whose routes take them through a ford near Potton in Bedfordshire. It was a delightful surprise when I rode on one of the routes recently and thought that it would make a good photo. Daniel has proven that it indeed does. **DAVID JENKINS**

SINGLE-DECKERS BY THE SILVERY TAY

Title:	Dundee's Buses: 75 Years of the Single-Decker 1921-1996
Author/ Publisher:	Derek Simpson
ISBN:	978-1-0369-3123-0
Specification:	210mm x 295mm, 100pp, softback
Price:	£24.99



Like many medium to large municipal undertakings, Dundee Corporation favoured double-deckers for much of its existence. Its tram fleet was double-deck, and its bus operations were so equipped in increasing numbers from 1931 onwards, but they were exclusively single-deck for their first ten years and single-deckers continued to play an important and occasionally controversial role afterwards.

They are the focus of Derek Simpson's sixth illustrated history of his home city's motorbuses, from four Thornycrofts in 1921 to three Optare MetroRiders and two Dennis Darts (one of them low-floor) new in August 1996 shortly before National Express acquired the latterly employee-owned Tayside Public Transport.

From purchasing mainly Leylands from 1926, only Daimlers and AECs were favoured from 1934 until 1975. The AEC single-deckers included three side-engined Qs in 1935 and five underfloor-engined Regal IVs in 1953. The proportion of single-deckers increased from the mid-1960s with a move to one-person operation — delayed by tortuous industrial relations — that brought AEC Reliances and Swifts and 36ft Daimler Fleetlines into the picture.

Secondhand midibuses, New Bus Grant-funded coaches, deregulation era minibuses and a mix of new and ex-demonstrator stock followed over the next 20 years. Among the later additions, in August 1993, was an East Lancs-bodied Scania MaxCi, one of the UK's first low-floor buses.

As in his earlier books, Simpson has sourced a variety of colour and black and white photographs to complement descriptions of these vehicles' careers. **AM**

CALENDARS FOR MACBRAYNES AND LONDON

Title:	The MacBrayne Circle 2026 Calendar
Specification:	210mm x 295mm, ringbound
Price:	£12 (cheque payable to 'The MacBrayne Circle') from Lawrence Sutherland, North of Scotland MacBrayne Circle, 3 Forestry Cottages, Moy, Inverness-shire, IV13 7YQ

Title:	London Bus Museum 2026 Calendar
Specification:	210mm x 295mm, ringbound
Price:	£9.75 (from https://www.londonbusmuseum.com/shop/)

The MacBrayne Circle 2026 Calendar
featuring photos by John Sinclair
2026 calendar
LONDON BUS MUSEUM

Calendars available for next year include these nostalgic offerings from opposite ends of Britain, from remote north-west Scotland and heavily built-up London. Both have colour photographs, one for each month plus a cover view, and open to A3 size with grid-style calendars with details of all UK bank holidays and other key dates.

The MacBrayne Circle photographs were taken by Dr John Sinclair in the 1960s and early 1970s, most in the Outer and Inner Hebrides. All show buses and coaches bought by MacBraynes, most of them in its red, cream and pale green livery; two are in grey and blue Highland Omnibuses coach livery after the iconic company's buses were absorbed into the Scottish Bus Group or sold to private operators. The February picture is a particularly atmospheric pier side scene in Skye, with two small Bedfords surrounded by cars and vans of the era, including a yellow Land Rover for the AA's Highland Patrol.

Most of those in the London Bus Museum calendar show preserved vehicles taking part in heritage running days, mainly from the museum's own collection, but there are also three images of contemporary buses. All have a strong London connection.

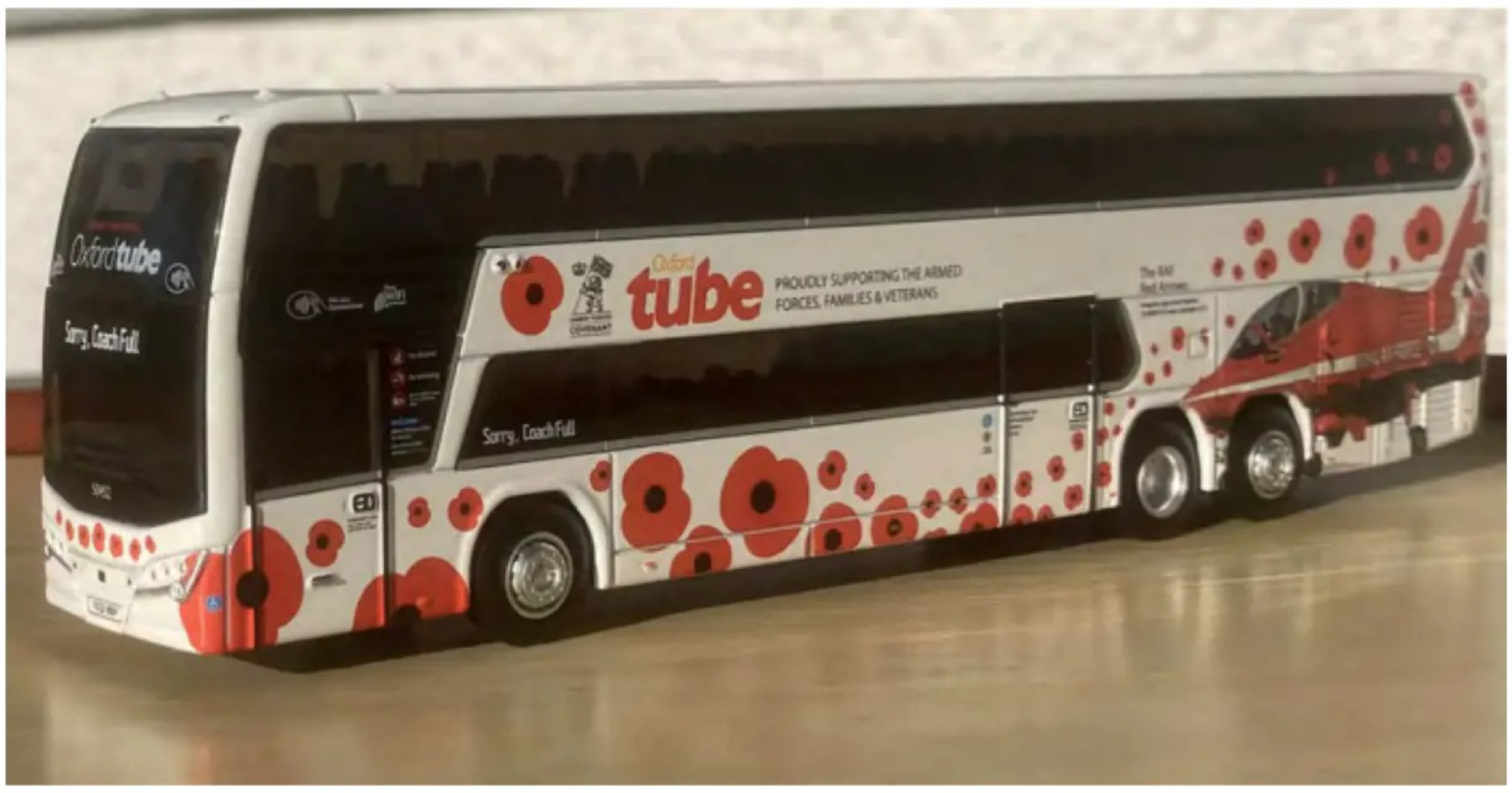
The rear cover provides visitor information including QR codes that access more detail on both the London Bus Museum and the Brooklands Museum site. Other key dates include the museum's annual general meeting and the three public events planned next year for which dates have been confirmed.

AM & MARK LYONS

DIECAST MODEL

A PANORAMA IN POPPY LIVERY

Vehicle:	Stagecoach West Plaxton Panorama 50452 (YX21 NNP) in Oxford Tube Poppy livery
Serial number:	8-1306
Manufacturer:	Holland Oto for Buckie Model Centre (www.buckiemodelcentre.com)
Scale:	1:76
Guide price:	£59 plus postage



Buckie Model Centre's growing selection of models of the Plaxton Panorama-bodied Volvo B11RLE now includes this depiction of an Oxford Tube vehicle in poppy livery showing Stagecoach's support for the Armed Forces Covenant.

The livery salutes branches of all the forces, RAF Red Arrows on the nearside, Royal Marines and Army Medical Corps on the offside, Royal Navy on the back. There are three destination options — Sorry, Coach Full; Lest We Forget; and Witney Carterton.

Other detail includes legal lettering, fleetnumber, door opening instruction notices and screenwash flap lettering. **AM**

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- REL Capital to sell its coach businesses
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- Mobico places National Express in Alsa control
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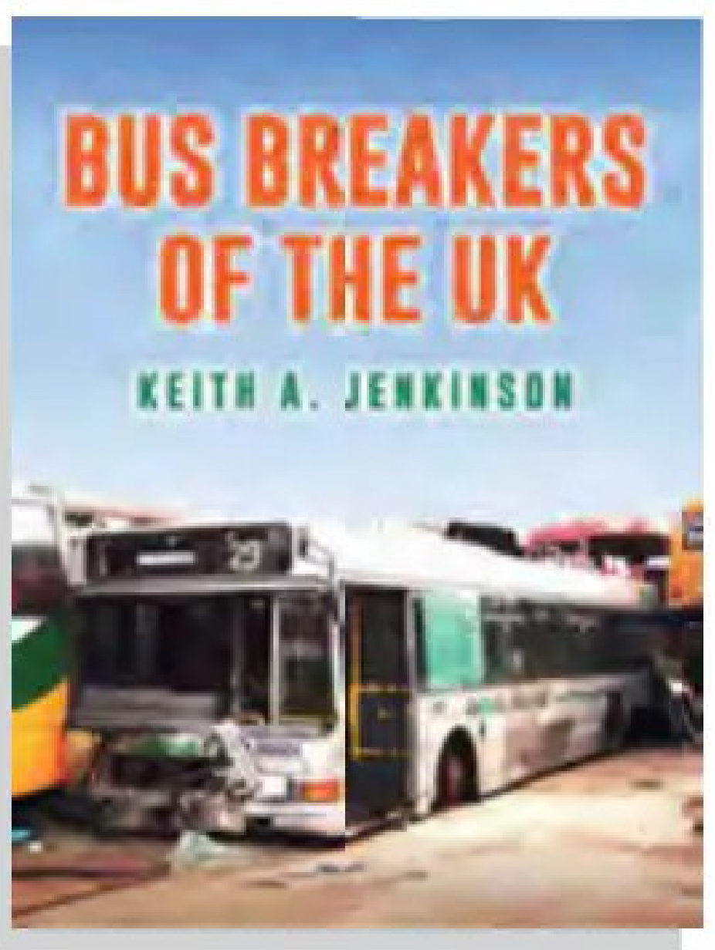
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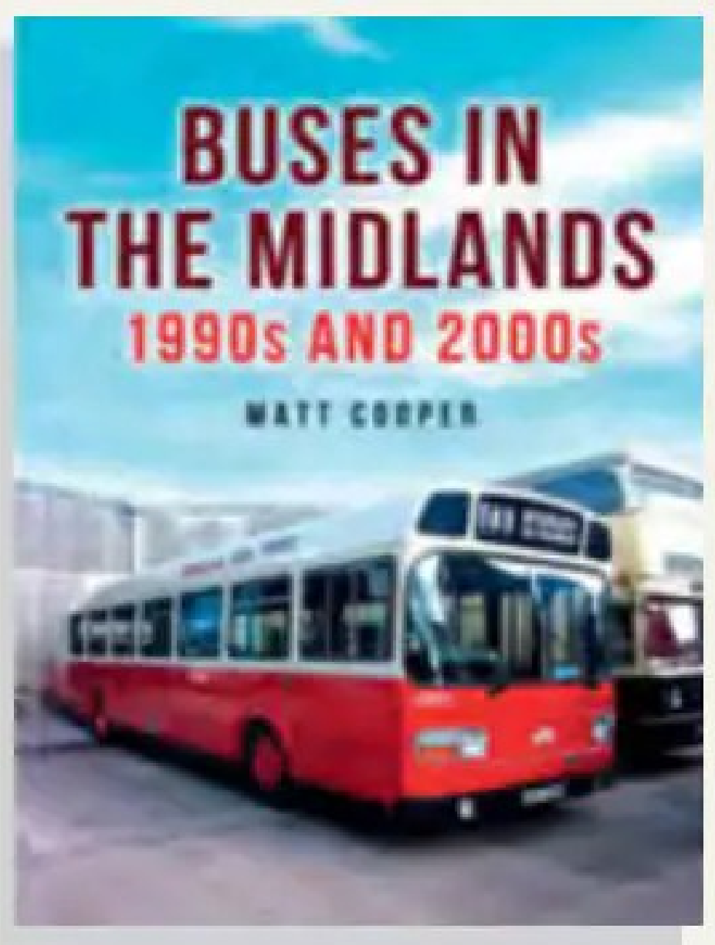
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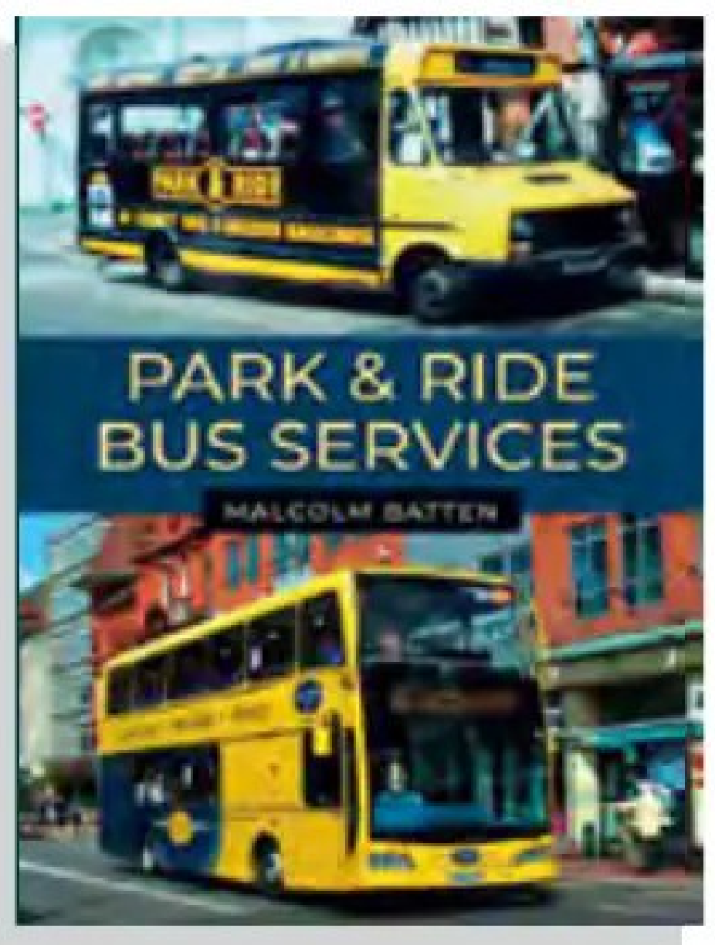
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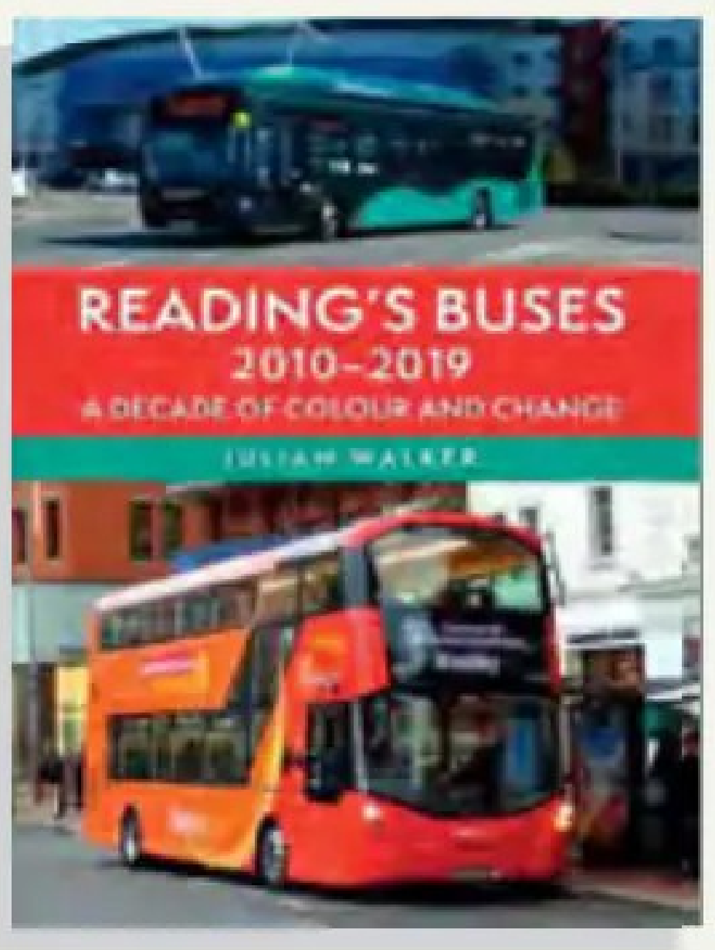
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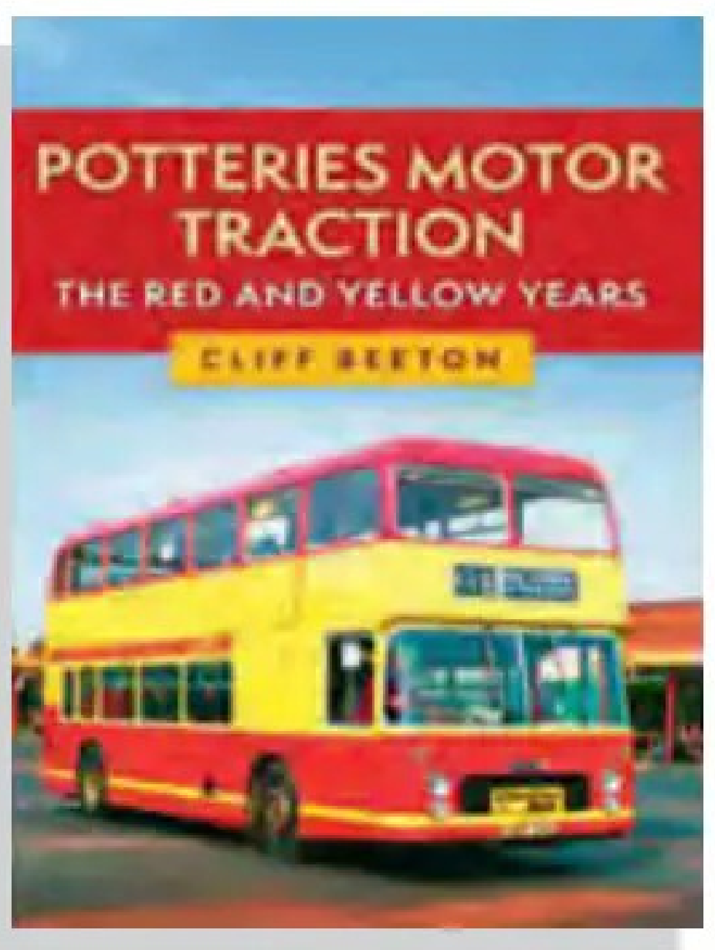
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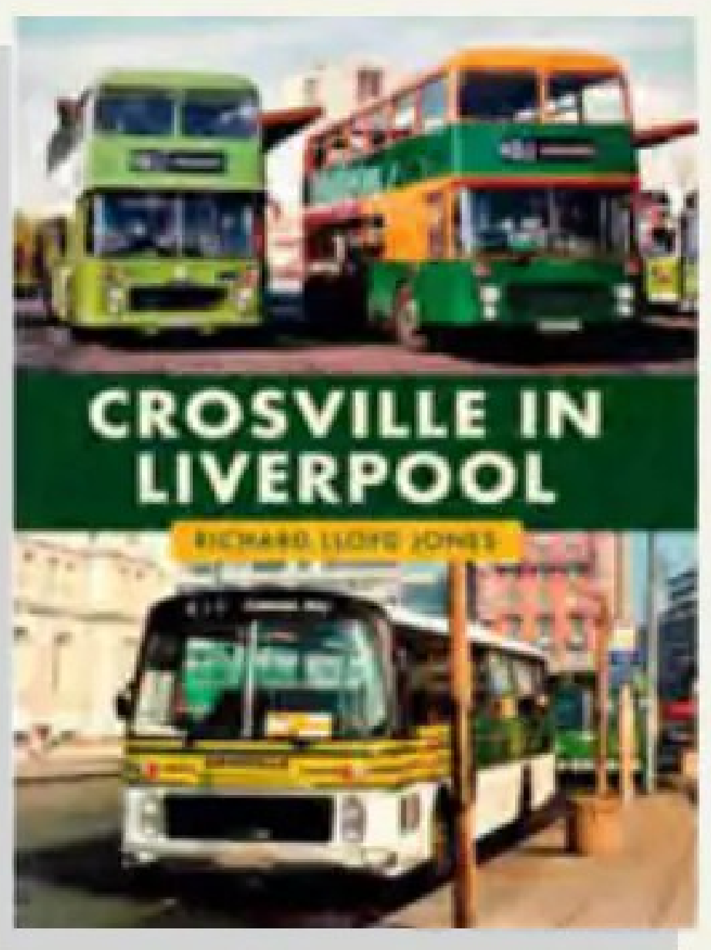
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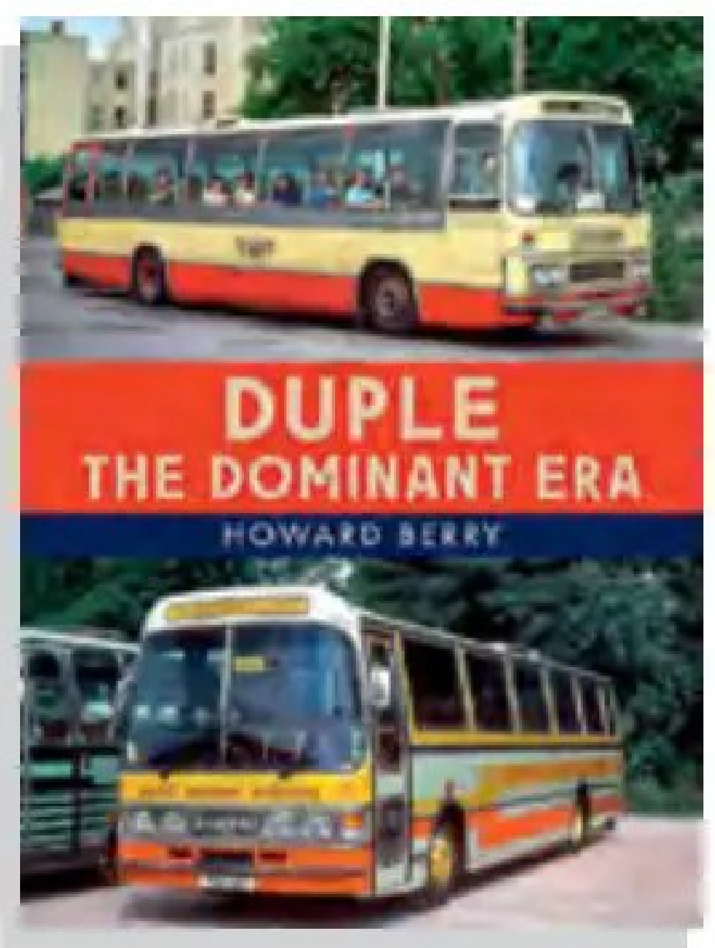
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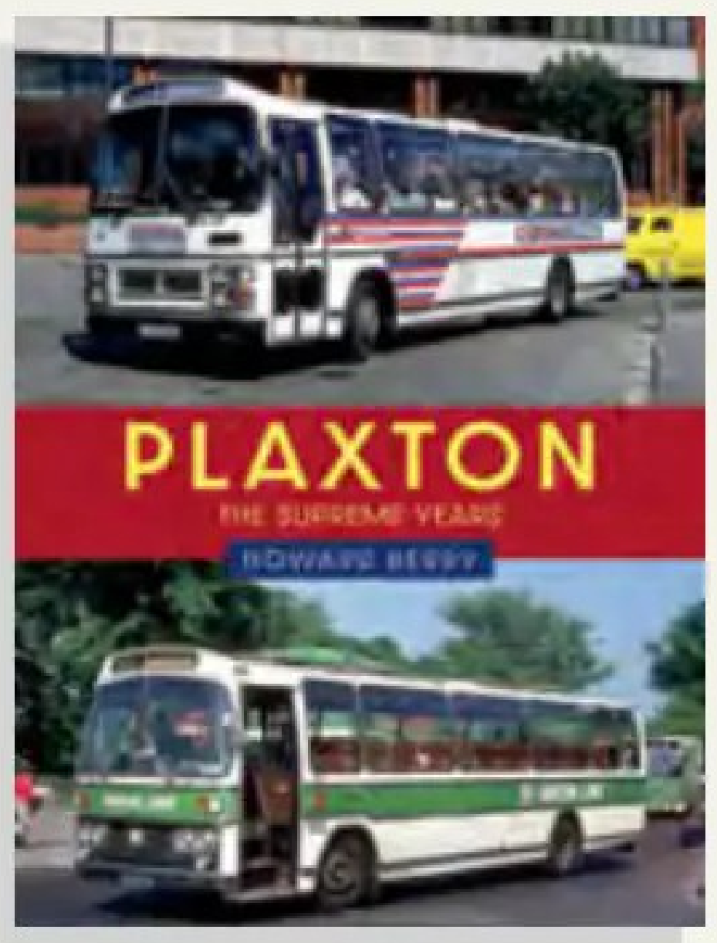
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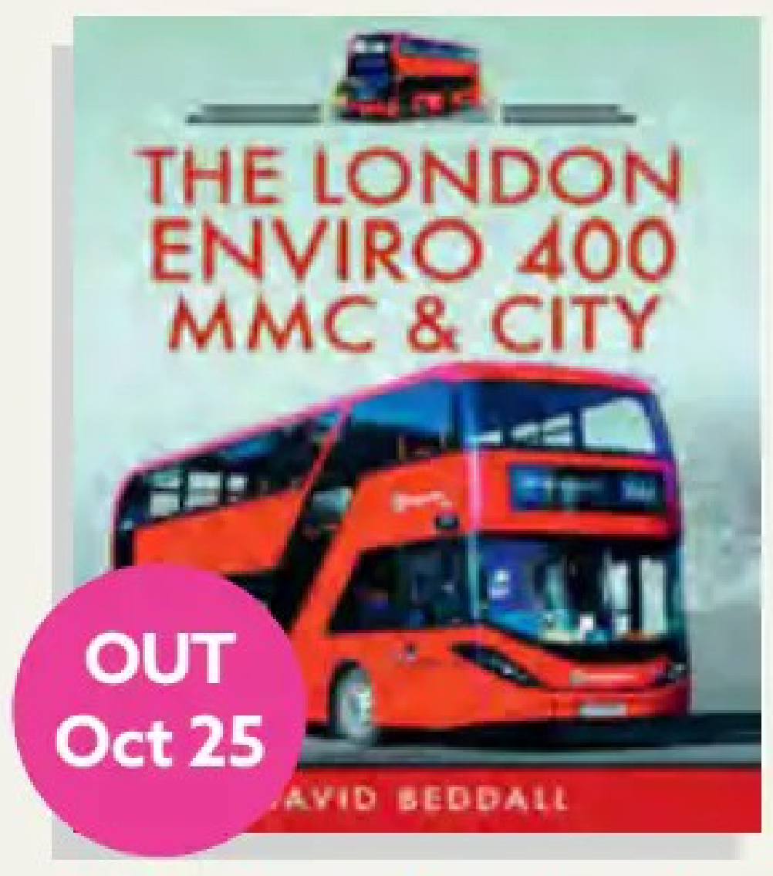
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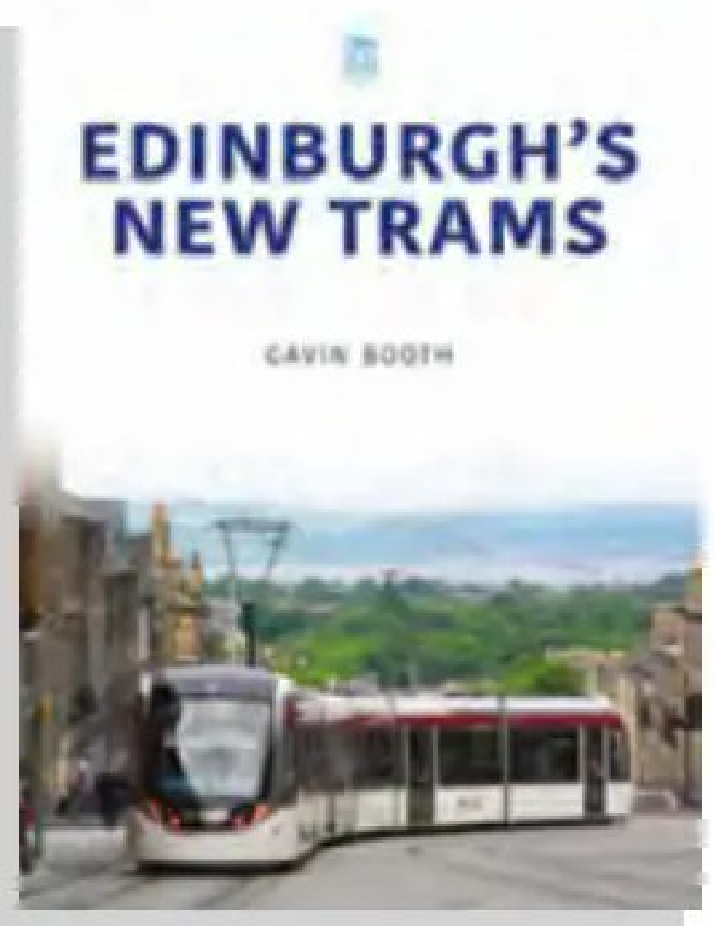
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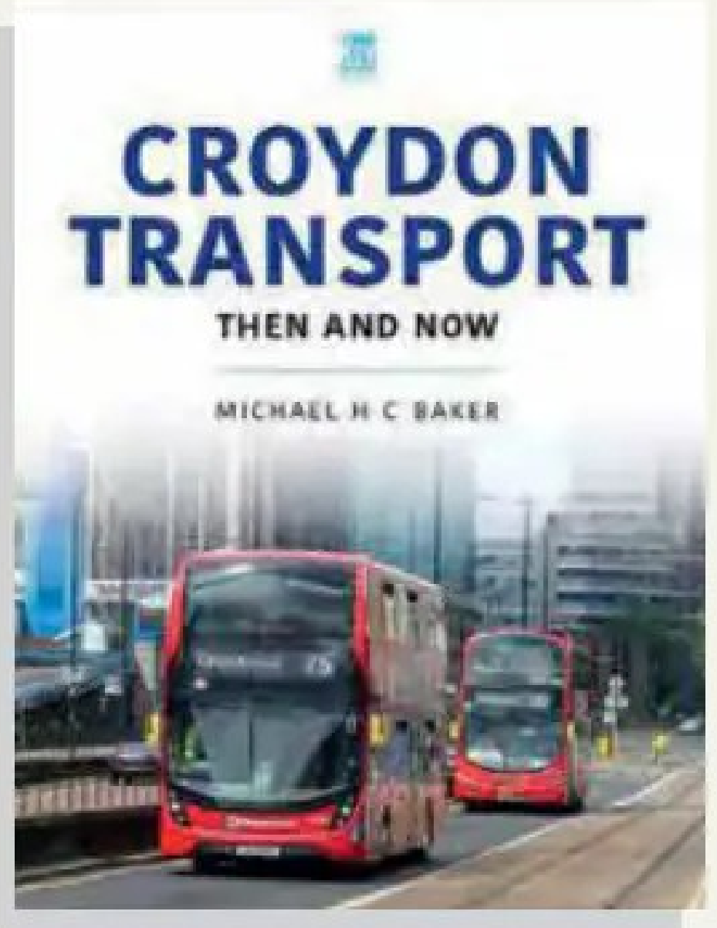
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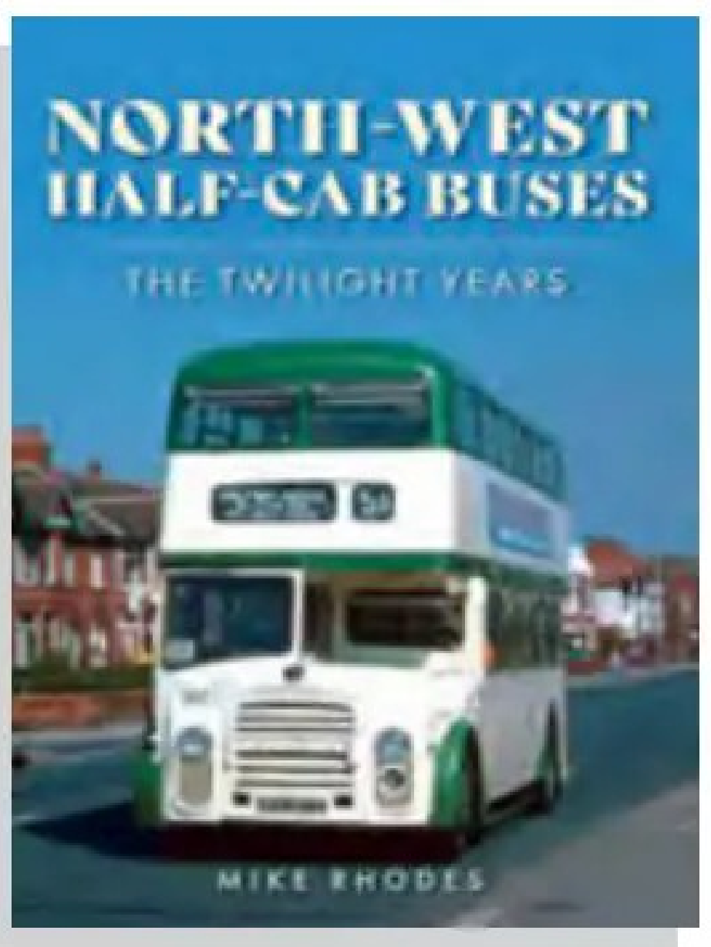
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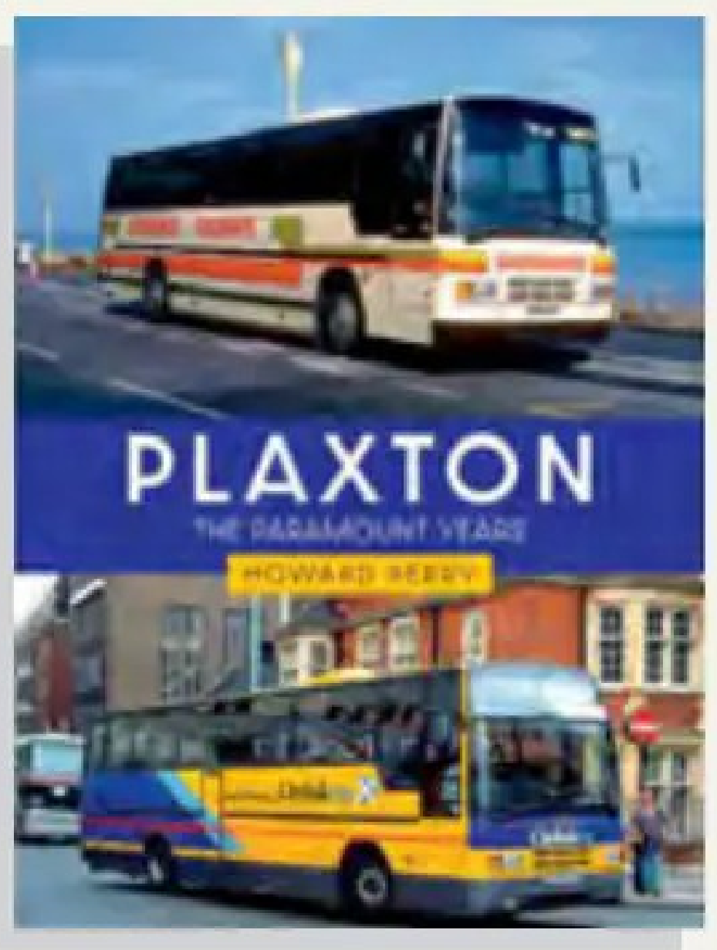
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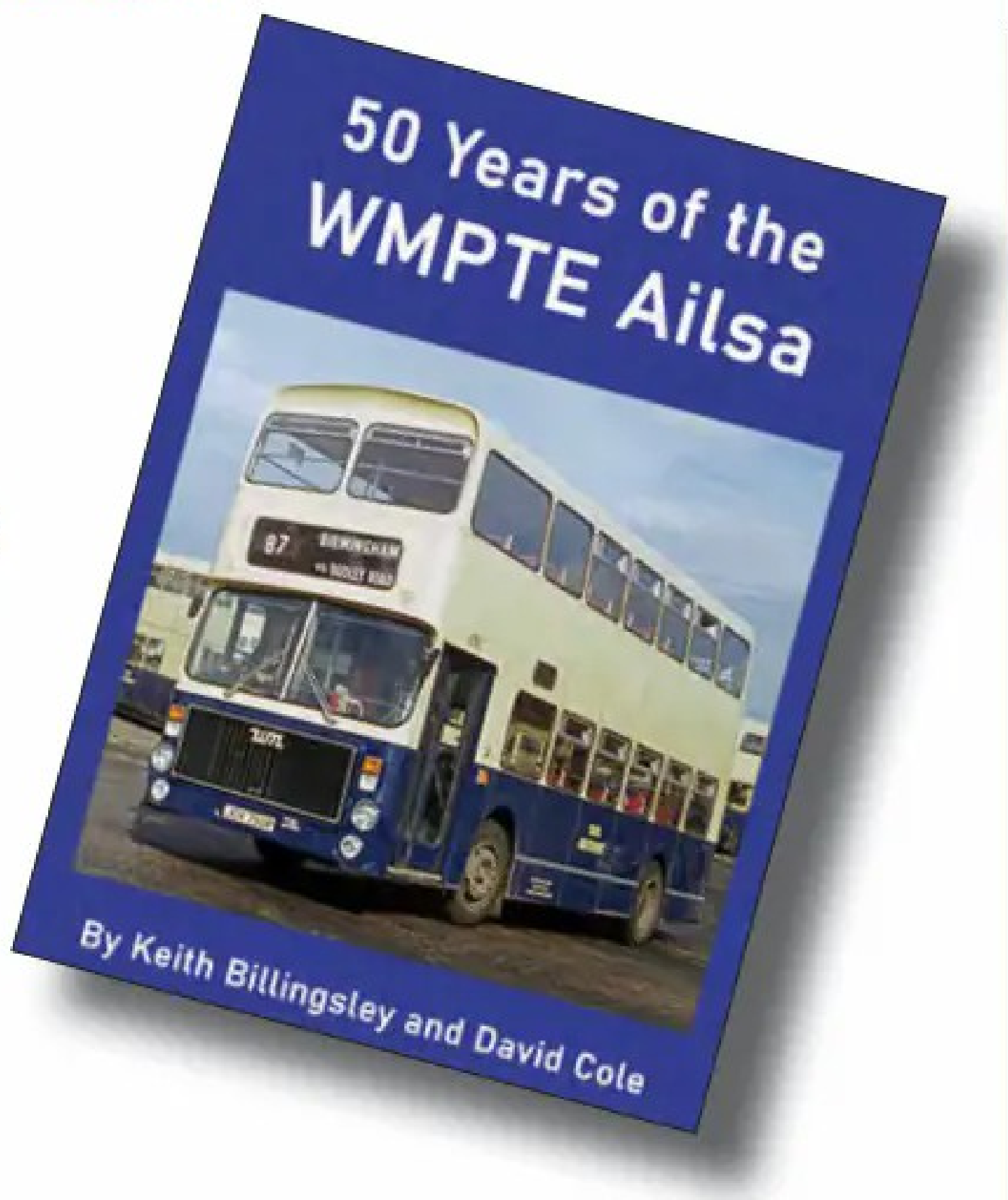
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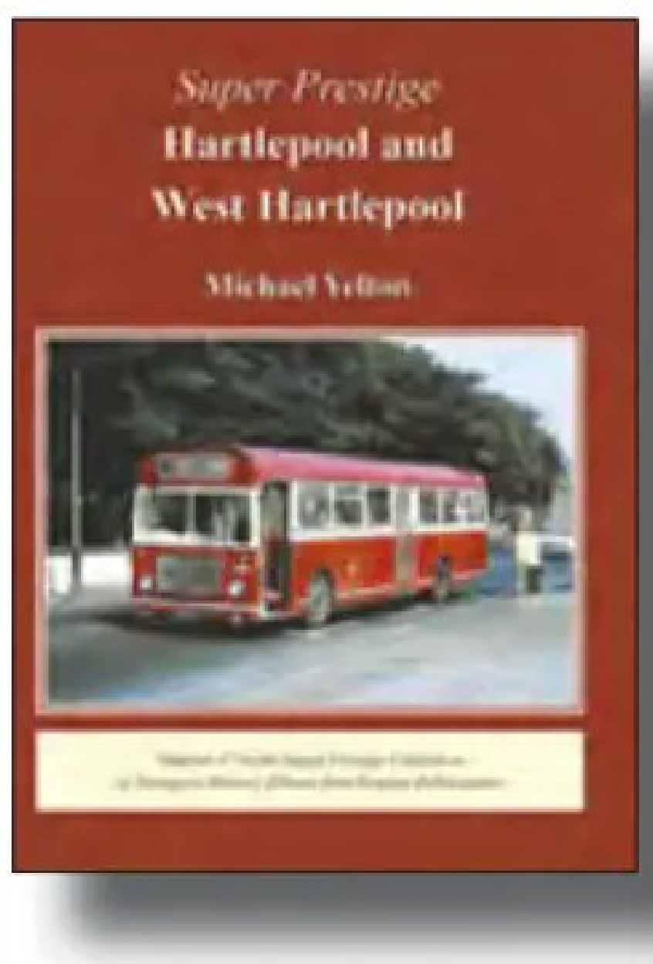
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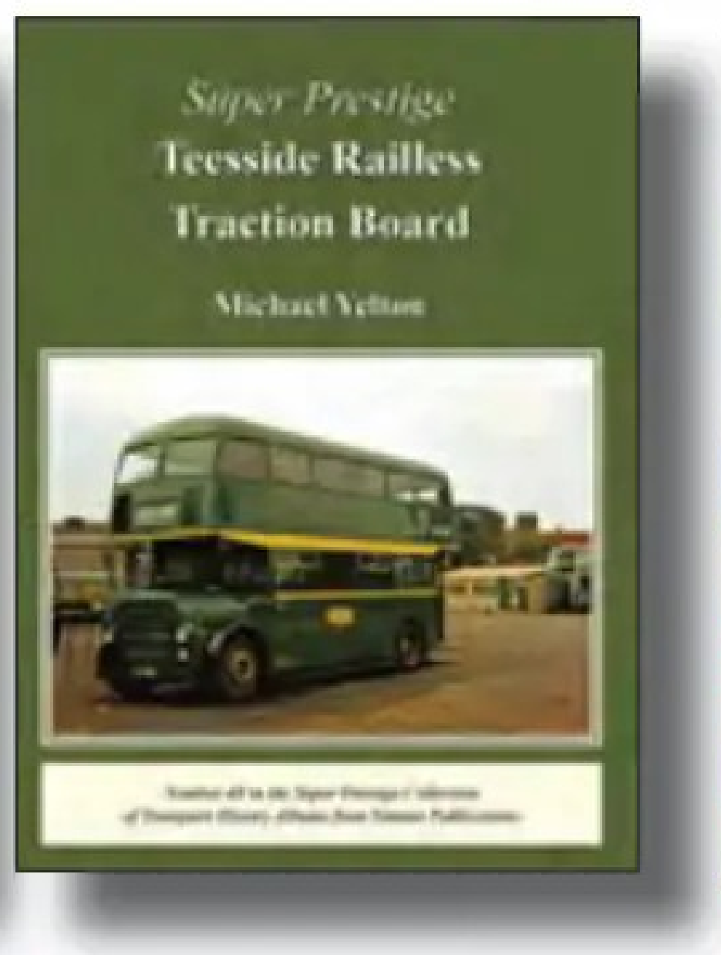
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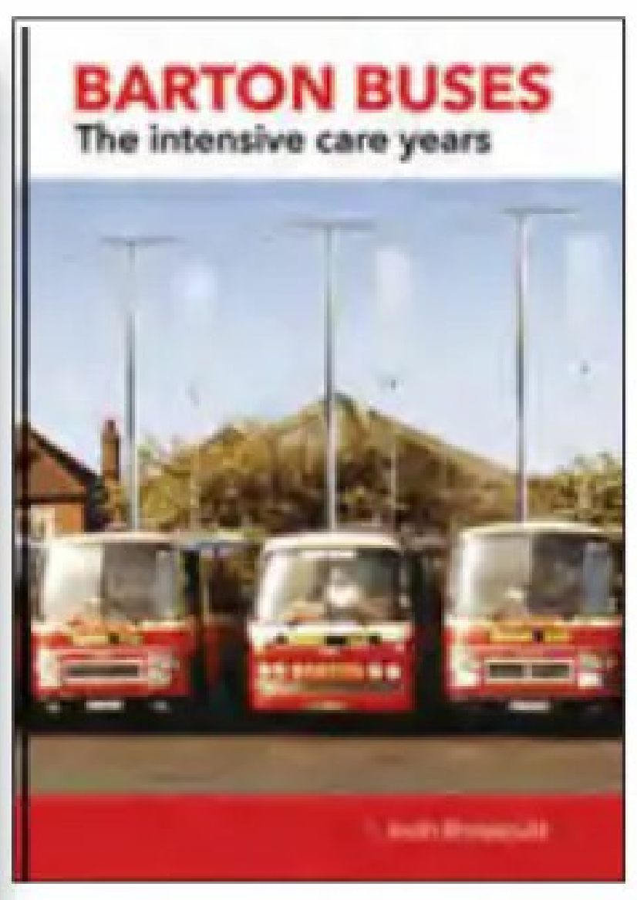
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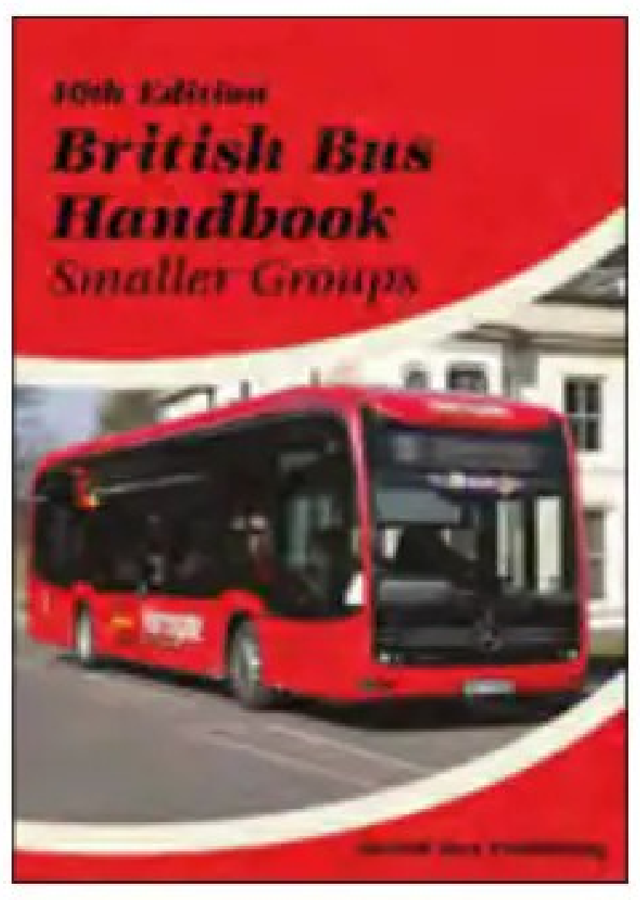
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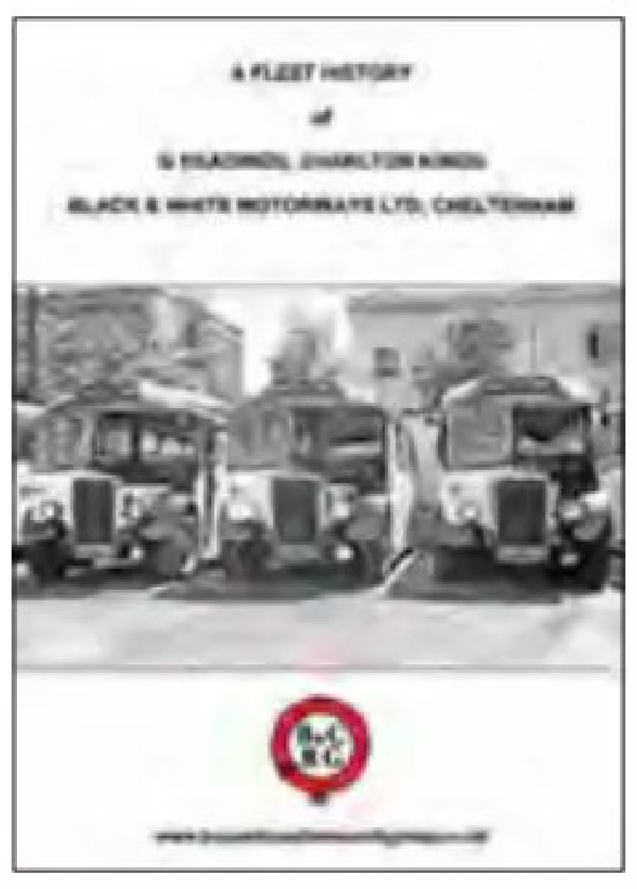

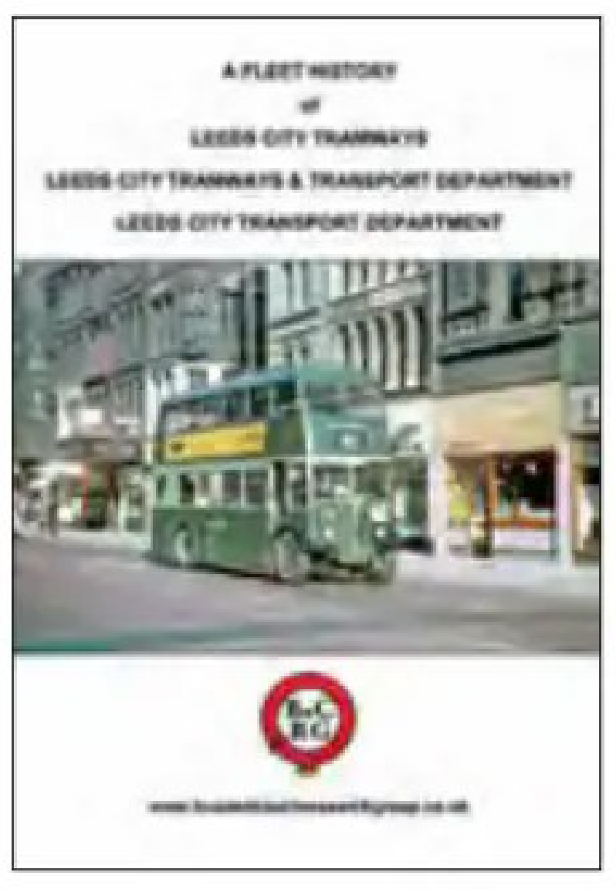

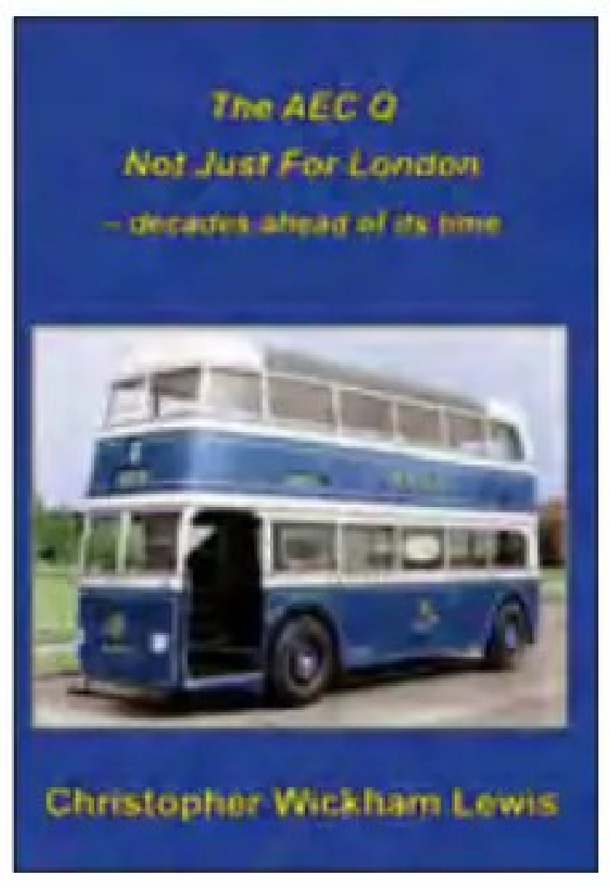
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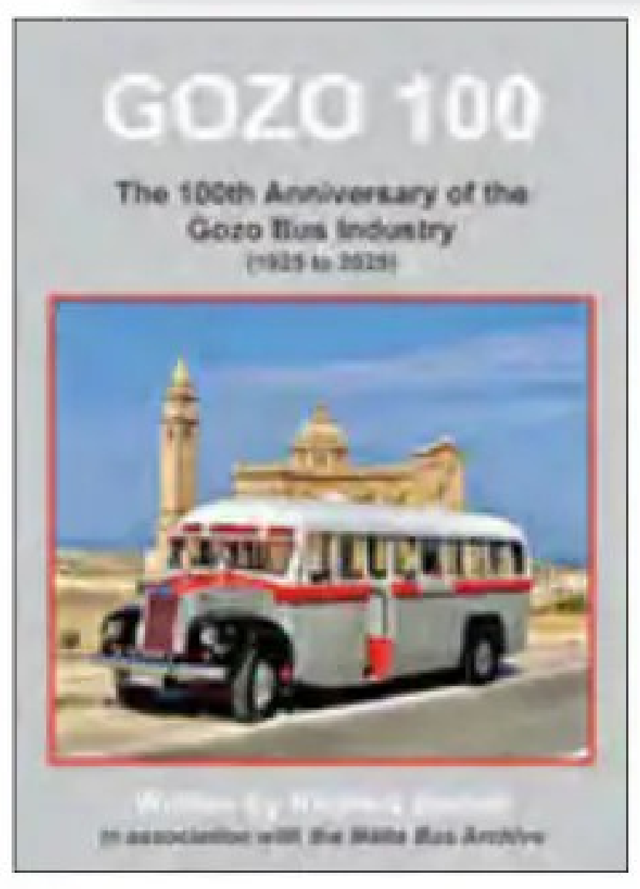
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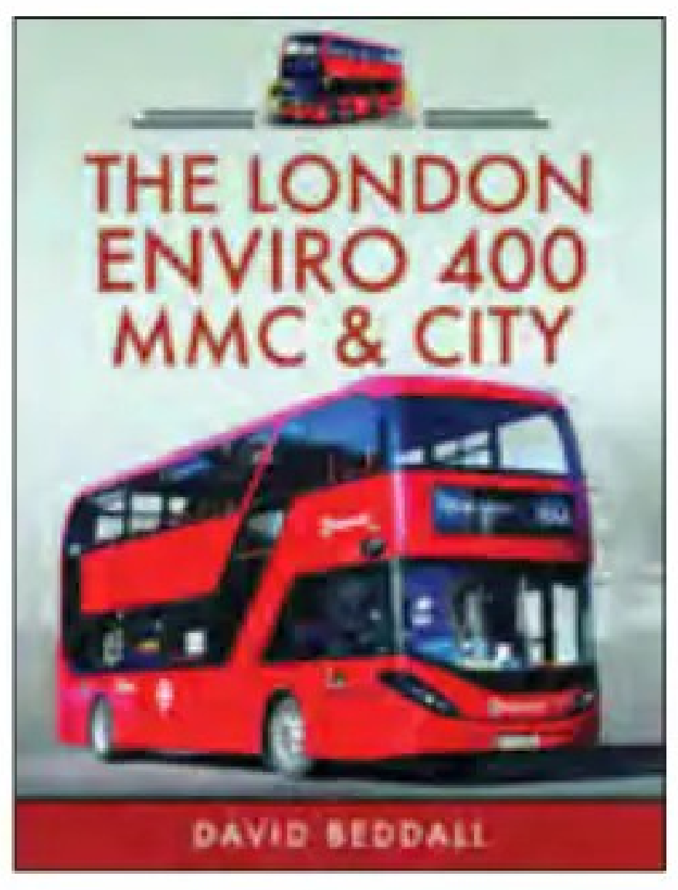
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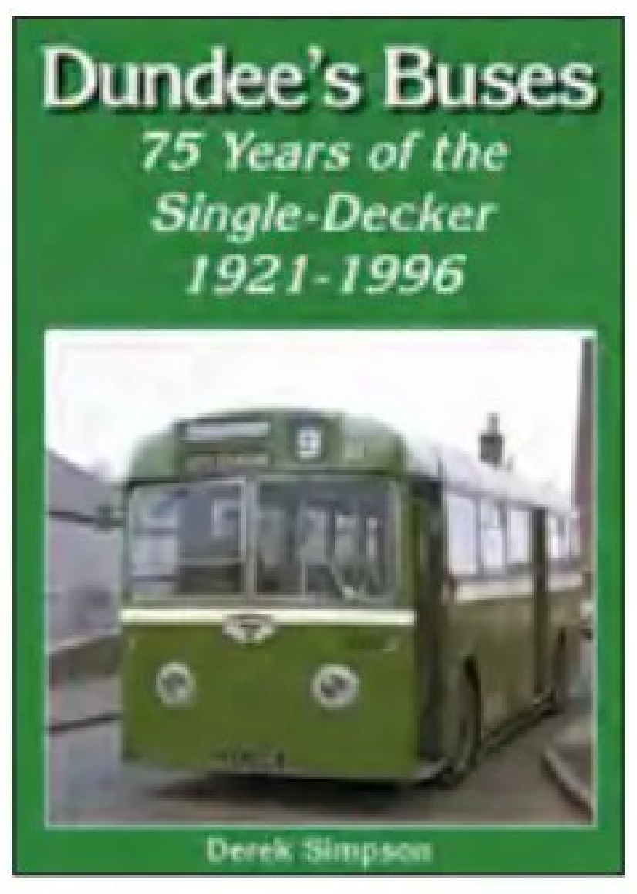
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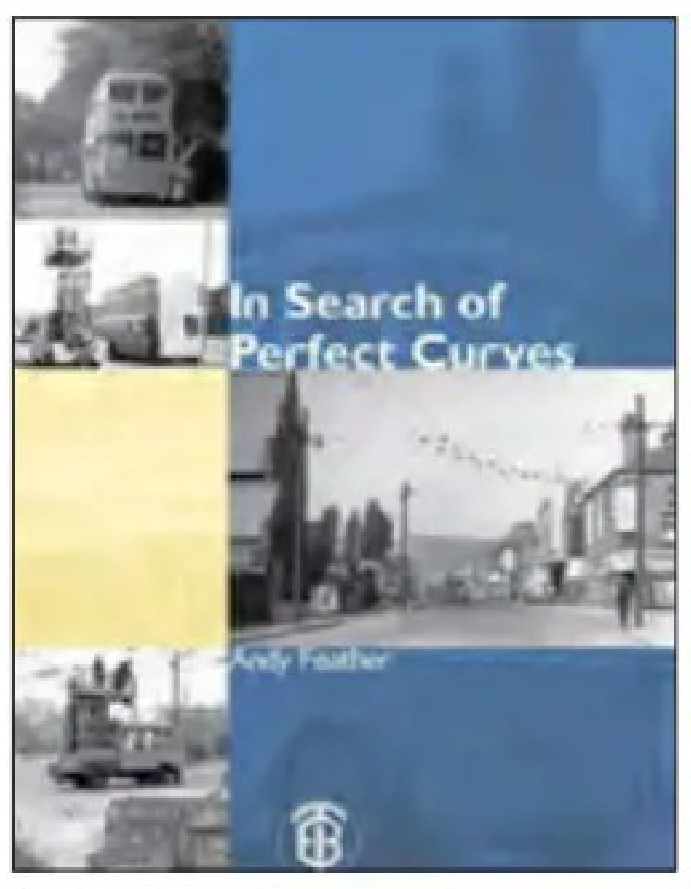
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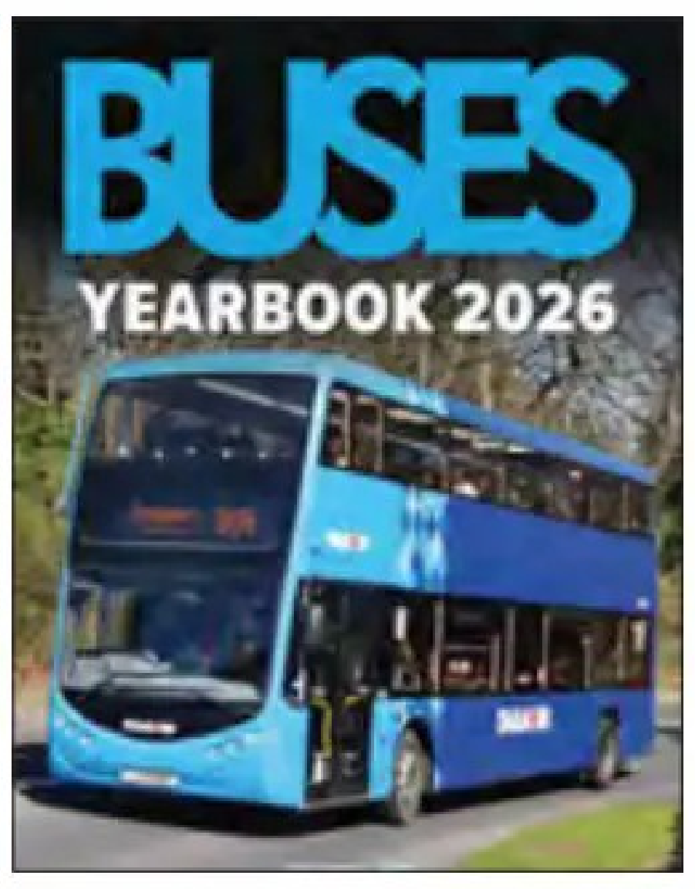
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